

IMPARTING SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TO A  
CITY-WIDE OUTREACH TO THE  
POOR AND HOMELESS

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **IMPARTING SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TO A CITY-WIDE OUTREACH TO THE POOR AND HOMELESS**

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This case study evaluated a two-day workshop which imparted the Holy Spirit gifts of healing and prophecy to ministry volunteers. Volunteers from some networked churches who reach out to the poor and homeless in Chesapeake, Virginia lacked experience in power ministry. The author hypothesized that the training, followed by a ten-week mentoring period, would result in effective healing and prophetic ministry. Comparison of pre- and post-tests, field notes, and a focus group generated data. The data suggests the project was effective in imparting Holy Spirit gifts, which led to impactful prayer encounters, and resulted in powerful testimonies.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AR	Action Research
CAST	Chesapeake Area Shelter Team
STC	Serve The City Chesapeake



## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the main purposes for which Jesus was anointed was to preach the Gospel to the poor (Lk 4:18-19). Our cities are especially filled with these marginalized ones who, because of difficult life experiences and circumstances, find themselves living at the lower end of the socio-economic scale or even homeless. In the city of Chesapeake, Virginia many Christian churches have banded together with government and police agencies, and together they assist with some vital physical needs of the “down and out” community. These area churches have organized to transform the city in the last ten years through efforts to assist with property improvement projects in needy neighborhoods, as well as providing a rotating winter shelter program for the homeless. This has resulted in improved morale and relationships, and has met many temporal and physical needs. However, the efforts have often stopped short of meeting the deep emotional and spiritual needs of the poor and homeless through ministering healing and comfort to their emotional and physical afflictions.

The purpose of this study is to add a new dimension of outreach to those efforts by meeting, more fully and directly, the deep needs of the poor and homeless through providing them spiritual, physical, and emotional hope, healing, comfort, and encouragement. This will be done through training and releasing church volunteers to operate in supernatural power; namely in the spiritual gifts of healing and prophecy (I Cor 12:9b, 14:1). Jesus came to set the captives free (Lk 4:18) and has charged his

followers to do the same (Mt 10:8). The aim of this project and its aftermath is centered on making Jesus' promises a reality for all mankind, but particularly the poor and homeless. The hypothesis was that if volunteers are trained and equipped for supernatural ministry in a weekend seminar, they would gain confidence, and be ignited to pray for the sick and prophesy to others effectively.

Chapter one further identifies the needs of the author's ministry context – compassion ministries for the poor and homeless in Chesapeake, Virginia. It describes how God brought me from the past that includes sorrow and loss over my family's break up and connected me with a ministry context that is full of broken families. This reality helped to form a foundation of compassion and love as my motivation to work with the poor and homeless. The chapter also includes some of the histories of the ministry context and some of the challenges that exist. This ministry project proposes to train volunteers in how to bring healing and prophetic encouragement to the poor and homeless. The hypothesis was that if volunteers are trained and equipped for supernatural ministry in a weekend seminar, they would gain confidence, and be ignited to pray for the sick and prophesying to others more effectively.

Chapter two presents the primary biblical support from the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT), which forms the basis for the ministry project. The OT passage features Elijah the prophet's ministry to the widow from Zerephath (1 Kgs 17:8-24) and highlights God sending his servant to minister in prophetic and healing power in an unlikely place to an unlikely woman and her son. The result was two mighty miracles that brought hope and healing to those outside Israel, and gave God much glory. The NT passages feature Jesus' ministry of compassion to the sick, hungry, and lost and harassed

“sheep” of his flock (Mt 14:13-14, Mk 6:34ff, Mt 15:32ff) and highlight the Greek word *splanchizomai*, meaning “to have compassion.” This study shows that compassion done Jesus-style goes well beyond a just feeling sympathy for someone else, but results in miracles of real healing and provision every time.

Chapter three studies the works of the great John Wesley, namely his penchant for ministering to the poor and how he cared not only for their souls but their entire beings. Wesley’s attitude toward the poor ran counter to many of his religious contemporaries who tended to view the poor as lazy and idle. Wesley saw the value of every soul, but was especially moved to minister compassionately to the poor. Wesley’s model ultimately formed the basis for the Methodist ethic of compassionate outreach, and exemplified the motivation underpinning this project — growth in unconditional love for others through a demonstration of Kingdom power via healing and prophecy.

Chapter four explores the theological foundation of what it means to be, “Baptized in the Holy Spirit.” An issue surrounded with much confusion and controversy in the last hundred years, the author shows that the common functional elements of the Holy Spirit baptism are the indwelling aspect (resulting in growth in character), and the empowering aspect (resulting in a demonstration of power). Both aspects are equally valid and needed for anyone who wishes to do function in ministry as Jesus modeled for us.

Chapter five analyzes the final project by first addressing the qualitative method approach taken in my action research and addresses my reasons for choosing this approach. This chapter also shows what I, as the researcher, did and when, as well as the means chosen to collect and triangulate the data. I then addressed what the project

participants and I learned during the project, and included a display of the summary of data. Finally, the chapter concluded by answering the question of how well the project worked, and what could have been done differently.

In summary, the theme of my project was the compassionate power ministry of physical healing and prophetic encouragement as modeled by Jesus in an urban context among those living in poor neighborhoods or experiencing homelessness. The next chapter will further define the ministry context and how my life story intersected it to form the basis for this project.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **MINISTRY FOCUS**

This chapter defines the author's ministry focus, which is the convergence of my ministry context and my ministry journey. The first part of this chapter is a review of the needs of my context and identification of the problem that my ministry project addressed. The second part is a review of some of my ministry skills, interests, and life experiences which influenced the choice of my project theme. The third is a discussion of how the analysis of my ministry context and personal ministerial development converged in this project. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a theme statement and hypothesis which formed the basis of the ministry project.

#### **Ministry Context**

The primary ministry context is the outreach and evangelism ministry arm of Coastlands Community Church<sup>1</sup>, hereafter referred to as Coastlands, in Chesapeake, Virginia where I've been a member since 2007, and currently serve as the volunteer pastor of outreach and evangelism. The overall objective and outcome of this ministry position are to help fulfill at a local level our national Foursquare denominational vision of "transform[ing] communities through the multiplication of disciples, leaders, churches,

<sup>1</sup> Coastlands is a congregation of approximately 150 and belongs to the larger Foursquare Gospel Church—a Pentecostal movement founded by Aimee Semple McPherson in 1921.

and movements."<sup>2</sup> Coastlands endeavors to fulfill this vision by working closely with other likeminded churches, government agencies, and parachurch organizations to serve the poor and homeless in the city of Chesapeake.

As such, the wider ministry context encompasses the broad network of churches desiring to transform our city under an umbrella 501(c) (3) organization called Heart of Compassion Partnerships. Under, or connected to, this network are two outreach ministries that our church partners with most extensively. They are, 1) Serve the City Chesapeake (hereafter referred to as STC), a group of churches that, among other things, complete property improvement projects in underserved communities, and 2) The Chesapeake Area Shelter Team (hereafter referred to as CAST), a group of churches that provide overnight winter shelter for the homeless in Chesapeake. Both outreaches draw largely from the same pool of churches, which represent a broad array of Christian denominational backgrounds.

The common purpose of these churches is to see Chesapeake's most vulnerable urban communities transformed through the good works and message of Christ Jesus. The STC and CAST ministries, organized seven and three years ago, respectively, have emerged as award winning outreaches serving vital needs in our city.<sup>3</sup> The charitable work being done and the level of unity and cooperation among the diverse group of

<sup>2</sup> "Our Mission," International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, accessed April 20, 2015, <http://www.foursquare.org/about/mission>.

<sup>3</sup> "Best Neighborhood Program Award," Neighborhoods USA, accessed May 25, 2015, <http://www.nusa.org/nusa-awards/best-neighborhood-program/notybestfinal2010/>. Likewise, the founder of the CAST organization was awarded as the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce's 2014 Woman of the Year, which has helped to make CAST the leading organization in the city's effort to end homelessness. See Liz Carey, "Chesapeake's Chamber Honor's City's Woman of the Year," The Virginian-Pilot, January 25, 2015, accessed April 13, 2015, <http://hamptonroads.com/2015/01/chesapeake-chamber-honors-citys-women-year>.

churches have gained the attention of our city officials. Pastoral leaders associated with these ministries now regularly meet with a key city leader for prayer, mutual edification, and sharing of needs and ideas to solve problems.

Chesapeake is one of nine cities that make up the larger metropolitan area of Hampton Roads, also called Tidewater, with an estimated population around 1.7 million. Living up to its motto of, "One Increasing Purpose" the City of Chesapeake has experienced explosive growth in population and economy since its inception in 1963. Since then, the population has grown from 78,000 to 230,000<sup>4</sup> making it the third most populous city in the Commonwealth.

It has been said that Tidewater, Virginia is the natural and spiritual womb of the nation because it hosted the first permanent British colony that led to the founding of our nation. The First Landing occurred on the shores of nearby Virginia Beach, followed by the first settlement at Jamestown in 1607. No doubt there is a strong, overt, testimony of Christian roots<sup>5</sup> evident in the history of our nation's first white settlers, which resulted in a certain blessing to the new land. Even so, the settlers and those who followed them to the shores of America fell prey to some evil influences, not the least of which was greed, or love of money, and brought certain curses on the land, especially through the evil institution of slavery. In his book, *Healing America's DNA*, local pastor and author Bob Fox contends that both the blessings and curses of this current generation can be traced to

<sup>4</sup> "History of Chesapeake," City of Chesapeake Virginia, accessed May 25, 2015, <http://www.cityofchesapeake.net/Visitors/history.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> The first colonists to arrive on the shores of Virginia described their evangelical purpose as, ". . . the Furtherance of so noble a Work, which may, by the Providence of Almighty God, hereafter tend to the Glory of his Divine Majesty, in propagating of Christian Religion to such People, as yet live in Darkness and miserable Ignorance of the true Knowledge and Worship of God." "The First Charter of Virginia; April 10, 1606," Yale Law School, accessed May 28 2015, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th\\_century/va01.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/va01.asp).

the respective righteous acts, and sins, of those who first came from England in the 16th Century to settle in this region.<sup>6</sup>

In a modern-day oxymoron that would support Fox's theory, the burgeoning growth of Tidewater's population and economy of the last few decades have not translated into greater financial security for the historically poor in our city. Two comprehensive studies, sponsored by City of Chesapeake, measured quality of life across the four dimensions of social, crime, physical, and economic factors. The studies showed that the median household income for the city overall is around \$70,000, but only around \$25,000 for families living in poorer, predominately Black neighborhoods. In addition, the redeveloping neighborhoods in the poorer sections of the city have historically suffered higher crime rates, failing schools, and higher rates of unemployment and homelessness. Historically, these inequalities have manifested along racial lines, with the majority Caucasian population generally faring better than the those of the minority Black and Hispanic ethnic groups.<sup>7</sup> The 2014 Census Bureau estimated the city ethnicity breakdown to be roughly 62% White, 30% Black, 5% Hispanic, and 3% Asian.<sup>8</sup>

In 2004, Coastlands adopted one of the historically underserved neighborhoods at the request of a local police precinct captain, and began serving them with ambitious vacation bible school programs and offering bus rides to church. After Serve the City was organized and began outreach efforts in 2008, Coastlands was joined by approximately

<sup>6</sup> Pastor Bob Fox strongly contends for revival through identificational repentance by the American church on behalf of the nation. See Bob Fox, *Healing America's DNA* (n.p.: CreateSpace, 2004), 50.

<sup>7</sup> "2014 Neighborhood Quality of Life Study Update," City of Chesapeake Virginia, accessed March 14, 2015, <http://www.cityofchesapeake.net/government/City-Departments/Departments/human-services/community-programs/community-development/2014-quality-of-life-study-update.htm>.

<sup>8</sup> "QuickFacts," U.S. Census Bureau, accessed July 4, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/chesapeakecityvirginiacounty/PST045216>.



thirty other churches in a larger effort to serve poorer neighborhoods. These churches serve about a dozen local neighborhoods with assistance from the police, civic leagues, and other organizations. The most extensive effort is accomplished through a massive weeklong outreach event held annually in late June. The aim of these volunteers is to demonstrate Christian charity by helping residents remove blight and disrepair from their properties, thereby maintaining home values and reducing crime.

Additionally, in 2007, Chesapeake recognized a growing trend of homelessness and adopted a ten-year plan<sup>9</sup> to deal with it, but the plan lacked a budget or staff to fulfill it, so it was left to the local churches to come up with an answer. In 2012, a coalition of local churches known as the Chesapeake Area Shelter Team (CAST) was formed to provide a winter shelter program for the homeless. In just three years of operation, the number of churches involved has increased from thirteen to thirty-seven. In the same period, the number of weeks that nightly shelter was provided for homeless adults and minors increased from nine to nineteen, and the number of guests served per night has increased from seventeen to thirty-four.<sup>10</sup> Coastlands hosts a week of the CAST program each year, providing homeless individuals and families hot meals, bag lunches, clothing, haircuts, access to social services, and a warm and safe place to sleep.

As reported above, the ministries of STC and CAST are making noble progress in serving some of the vital needs of our city's underserved and homeless populations. The work of churches involved with STC and CAST has drawn the praise of our city's

<sup>9</sup> "Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness," City of Chesapeake Virginia, accessed May 8, 2015, <http://www.cityofchesapeake.net/government/City-Departments/Departments/human-services/community-programs/outreach/homelessness/ten-year-plan-end-homeless.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Bill Bunting, "Chesapeake Area Shelter Team (CAST), Overnight Shelter Program for the Homeless" (video), March 19, 2015, accessed February 10, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tispDMkf07Q>.

government. There's every reason to believe that this favor will continue to grow in width and breadth of impact, with increasing numbers of churches and volunteers getting involved. Even so, a deeper transformation in the spiritual fabric of the communities is desperately needed. STC and CAST and their partnering ministries and churches are making strong foundational strides in reaching the city for Christ. Still, there is a great need for a more empowered witness for Christ, manifesting in the kind of fruit that the Early Church saw in the Book of Acts when people's needs were completely met in an atmosphere filled with miracle healings, deliverances, and signs and wonders wrought by the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:33-34).

Many STC and CAST partner churches limit their outreach to only a week or so a year, with sometimes little follow up or ongoing relationship with the people and neighborhoods served. Such limited involvement tends to make volunteers feel good about serving for a time, but does little to bring about the desired long term spiritual transformation needed in the lives of volunteers as well as those being helped. If volunteers are trained in a proven model of ministering in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit, some will gain an unquenchable desire to heal the brokenhearted and bring freedom to the captives (Is 61:1-3). If those who catch the fire of this vision take it back to their churches, we may yet see the collective church of Chesapeake stepping outside the limits of doing compassion ministry by meeting temporal needs and expanding into a ministry of power that effects deep change — meeting deep spiritual needs that impact spirit, body, and soul.

## **Ministry Journey**

Growing up in home and grade school I remember being the tall blue-eyed blonde kid who was often the favorite of friends and teachers. I was also very sensitive to feelings and easily got along with people. Yet I experienced brokenness and sin up close and personal when my parents divorced when I was six years old. The strife in our home and the resulting split-up of our family hit me hard with false guilt and a fear of rejection. For the next twelve years, I was set on a roller coaster ride of multiple moves, multiple step-parents, and living in some very unstable environments. My mother quickly remarried to an alcoholic man after a short courtship, and our lives became increasingly unstable. I knew my mother loved me and she showed me that, but she lacked good parental skills and abilities. My sister and I ran around the neighborhood at all hours mostly unsupervised. We did not know at the time, but during that period my mother was afflicted with a mental illness called bipolar disorder and had symptoms of both depression and mania. When I was twelve, she was hospitalized, necessitating a sudden move for my sister and me to live with our father who lived five states away. Despite my very unstable home life during this period, I genuinely accepted Jesus Christ as Savior of my life and was water baptized at a local Baptist Church just before we moved.

At the critical age of twelve, I found myself starting a new life almost two-thousand miles away. My father was a very capable provider of our physical needs, but he wasn't as in touch spiritually or emotionally. As one who was fatherless most of his childhood, he had little understanding and ability to lead and nurture us in tender fatherly love. I grew to view him as difficult to please, and I was afraid to disappoint him. My people pleasing nature was exacerbated in this environment, and I was unconsciously

driven to perform to gain acceptance from others. At the same time, a spirit of immorality had an open door in the home, and even as a pre-pubescent boy I was exposed and attracted to lust and, at times, pervasive sexual sin. I also found it natural and easy to mix in with my surroundings and do whatever was popular with my friends and whatever would gain approval for me at the time. Sometimes that meant indulging with my friends in sex, drinking, and drugs, and at other times it meant over-achieving as an outstanding athlete and student. My primary motivation was to gain approval and not risk the rejection and abandonment which came largely due to the insecurity caused by my parent's divorce and its aftermath.

Until I began to find my true identity in God, I basically lived for the approval of others throughout my teenage years. On one level I looked like the complete package in junior high and high school — the quintessential "stellar student-athlete," but in reality, there was an emptiness and frustration in my heart, and a lack of moral integrity gnawing on my insides. I felt most embarrassed and exposed when at the age of fifteen my girlfriend got pregnant. Fear gripped me and I could not bring myself to tell my parents. In a panicked state, we had the child aborted not realizing the depth of emotional and spiritual upheaval this decision would bring. Finally, at the age of eighteen years old I was awakened by the grace of God calling me out of my lost and sinful state (Rom 5:20). God met me while I was visiting relatives on Christmas break of my senior year in high school. I came under conviction, and my aunt and uncle led me back to relationship with Christ and introduced me to the Spirit-filled/charismatic dimension of Christianity. I felt a new sense of unconditional love that I'd been longing for since my early childhood, and

the burden of my sin was lightened. This was truly a new beginning for me and one that has deeply affected my life up to and including now.

In 1985, while attending college at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, I grew in my faith and began to sense a call to ministry. Early in my experience at the Academy, a chaplain suggested that I should become a chaplain someday. I would always remember his simple, prophetic words. When eleven years of active duty in the Coast Guard ended, I entered and completed seminary. After additional experience in the local church and one year's training in hospital chaplaincy, I was ordained and entered the Navy Chaplain Corps in 2002. I served mostly younger Sailors and Marines as their pastor while we were deployed together overseas. I learned a good deal about the importance of having a spiritual family and faithful fellowship with believers while away from my own family which by now consisted of my lovely wife and two young children. My most meaningful memory in twelve years as a Navy chaplain is the Lord helping me to lead several people into a deeper experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit, and training some of them to pray for the sick.

### **Developing the Synergy Between Context and Journey**

I will now develop the convergence of my current ministry context with how the Lord shaped me as a person both before and since my call to ministry. As stated above, my context is a ministry of compassion among those living in lower socio-economic neighborhoods and those experiencing homelessness in the city of Chesapeake, Virginia. The goal of a growing network of churches is to work and serve as a united front to bring transformation to the city's most needy areas and people in the name of Jesus. The

problem that my project aimed to solve is a general lack of power ministry occurring across our city's outreach to the poor and homeless. The ministry project that I developed and executed amounted to a small but genuine introduction of a new component of supernatural ministry by way of training believers in how to heal the sick and prophesy encouraging words.

My experience living with brokenness in my family of origin has calibrated my heart to feel compassion for the poor and marginalized. Many times, I felt like the odd one who was without a "normal" family. Depression brought such depth of suffering on my mother that she could hardly function as a mom and became suicidal. Yet, I didn't understand what was happening with her and was angry that she was so weak and could not keep a clean and orderly home. Sadly, I was ashamed to have some of my friends around my house, and I feared being embarrassed to have my mom come to school or be seen in public with her. This is part of the negative stigma of mental illness caused by those who judge or look shamefully upon them. There are many families impacted by mental illness in my ministry context who feel its effect on a regular basis.

In addition, the divorce of my parents and being sent to live away from my father induced a fear of rejection and guilt. I developed a root of rejection from within, as I took on my mom's pain, and I missed having a stable and loving father figure consistently present through an important period of my early childhood. At some level I wondered if it was my fault for the family breakup, as is commonly the case in divorced families. While my background could have been much worse, I can at least identify with some of the pain of young children parented by single-moms and single-dads who long for a deep loving relationship with both parents.

Many of the urban poor and homeless deal with a sense of rejection and social stigma daily. Dr. Timothy Keller in a recent sermon noted that, "The world throws [the poor] away. . . because they own nothing that the world values or wants."<sup>11</sup> He said that 80% to 90% of the Bible's references to the poor do not point to poor people's irresponsible behavior (frequent crime, cynicism, hopelessness) as a cause of their circumstances, but rather the behavior of the poor is in response to their being in a state of poverty.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps picking up on the deep sense of frustration and anger felt by those living in the inner city most profoundly is preacher Dr. Robert Scott. In a recent sermon, he bemoaned how the black churches have lost their prophetic voice on the issue of racial justice because of being seduced by the prosperity gospel. Taking up the voice for justice, he said, are the disenfranchised ones on the streets of our cities. Scott shouted, "for too long they have been disregarded, disinherited, disqualified, disempowered, distained, disturbed, distraught . . . been just plain ole' dissed!"<sup>13</sup> Although I have experienced some similar pain in my background I cannot fully identify with the level of anger and brokenness noted by Dr. Scott. Even so, I can have some genuine compassion for those in my ministry context.

As both a volunteer and professional chaplain for over twenty years serving in prisons, hospitals, and the military, I have and gained ministry experience with many age groups, religions, races, and socioeconomic classes. I feel quite at home doing ministry in non-traditional settings and adapting my style of ministry to the audience and

<sup>11</sup> Timothy Keller, "Blessed are the Poor" (podcast of sermon, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York, April 5, 1998), accessed February 13, 2016, <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/timothy-keller-sermons-podcast/id352660924?mt=2>.

<sup>12</sup> Keller, "Blessed."

<sup>13</sup> Robert Scott, "Morning Plenary Session" (lecture, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH, January 26, 2016).

organization, while staying true to my charismatic and Pentecostal roots. In 2001-2002, I served as volunteer staff of an urban church and soup kitchen. I received invaluable experience serving the underprivileged, and observed how genuine Christian community functioned in that environment.

While serving as a chaplain in the war zone on ships and in hospitals, I pastored people who were in many emotionally stressful situations. This included being deployed away from home and family for long periods and being exposed to the acute evils of war. I'm only partially aware of how these past experiences will apply to my future ministry, but I trust that God has led and prepared me well for serving the urban poor and homeless, which is the ministry calling and context of this thesis and project. In this context, I am faced with such problems as families and individuals growing up in broken homes, absentee fathers, single mothers struggling to raise kids, teens struggling with sexual and identity issues, mental illness, and drug and alcohol abuse, just to name a few. As mentioned above, I suffered personally through some of these same issues in my past life and family background, and know that only through the grace and power of God can one overcome these challenges.

### **Conclusion**

The theme of my project was the compassionate power ministry of physical healing and prophetic encouragement as modeled by Jesus in an urban context among those living in poor neighborhoods or experiencing homelessness. The poor and homeless encountered by the STC and CAST programs commonly carry the burdens of spiritual oppression and bodily illnesses, but many volunteers in the current setting are not



spiritually equipped to minister in power. This project aimed to train and equip volunteers to pray for the sick and to prophecy in a weekend seminar so that they might gain boldness and confidence to increasingly initiate supernatural prayer for others. There is a strong biblical precedent and foundation for such a ministry, and that is discussed next.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS**

The author serves as a church and community leader in compassion ministry to the homeless and in urban transformation for a poor neighborhood near his church. If a greater degree of biblical power — the power of the Holy Spirit — is infused into this ministry context, the collective effort of the communities' churches will be dynamically more effective in ministering to the poor and homeless. This would result in an expanded ministry of love that goes beyond meeting mostly temporal physical and social needs of the people, to a demonstration of a supernatural Gospel which meets deep spiritually rooted needs through healing and prophetic prayer.

It is essential to ask at the beginning, "What does compassion mean and what does it look like?" The Merriam-Webster definition of compassion is, "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it." By definition then, genuine compassion evokes feelings much deeper than merely feeling sorry for a person. Compassion is an action word<sup>1</sup> — an inner feeling that results in outward action. It means having sympathetic feelings "together with" a desire to alleviate suffering and then acting on that desire.

The goal of this chapter is to look at how selected passages from the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) speak to us about demonstrating biblical

<sup>1</sup> Dave Donaldson, *The Compassion Revolution* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2010), 16.

compassion through a lifestyle of risking praying for miracles, especially those that bring healing to the sick and prophetic hope to the down and out. The OT story comes from I Kings 17:8-24<sup>2</sup>, where Elijah was directed by God to the widow of Zerephath, resulting in a miracle of supernatural provision and a miracle of resurrection. The NT study will look at several occurrences where Jesus was "moved with compassion" with resulting miracles and healings. Each chapter division will begin with a brief background section followed by interpretative insights and life applications from the narratives' most relevant points. The chapter will conclude with a brief description how the scriptures studied are foundational to the Doctor of Ministry project.

### **Old Testament Biblical Foundations**

#### *Background: Elijah the Prophet*

Perhaps like unlike any other prophet in the Bible except Jesus, Elijah (and his protégé Elisha) performed some of the most notable and dramatic miracles recorded in the Bible. Calling down fire and rain from heaven and splitting the waters were just some of those memorable miracles. It figures that most of these wonders were miracles of nature, as arguably Israel's greatest spiritual foe at the time was the worship of the false "storm god" Baal<sup>3</sup>, which was competing with the true worship of Yahweh. Elijah directed his message of repentance in a time of national apostasy toward not only the

<sup>2</sup> New Kings James Version (NKJV). Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this chapter are from the NKJV.

<sup>3</sup> Jon Mark Ruthven, *What's Wrong with Protestant Theology? Tradition Vs. Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2013), 86.

prophets of Baal, but especially to King Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kgs 18:17-40). Thus, most of Elijah's miracles were messages of warning, calling their witnesses to a decisive moment - they must decide for or against God.<sup>4</sup>

The Bible distinguishes Elijah as a mighty prophet of God for the ages not only by the colorful miracle stories attributed to him in the OT, but also by the fact that "the archetypal prophetic role of the prophet begins with his successor, Elisha, and reaches into the NT."<sup>5</sup> Elijah is referred in the book of Malachi as the "the prophet [who God will send] before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord . . . to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers" (Mal 4:5-6).

It is fitting, then, that Elijah is prominent in the NT as well. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus links the preparatory ministries of John the Baptist and Elijah: "and if you are willing to accept it, he [John the Baptist] is Elijah who is to come" (Mt 11:14). In other words, John the Baptist came with the same mind and character of Elijah to prepare the way of the Lord by warning the people of their sins and urging them to turn to God. Also, in the accounts of Jesus' transfiguration witnessed by three disciples, it is Elijah along with Moses who appear talking with Jesus (Mt 17:1-8). Elijah has a lasting and prominent legacy in the Bible as one who powerfully spoke and acted for God in a time of national apostasy. Elijah's strong warning message is arguably just as relevant today with lukewarm religion so common in the American church, and compromised national leaders threatening to weaken the country by promoting diabolical practices such as abortion on demand and same-sex marriage.

<sup>4</sup> Paul D. Gardner, ed. *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Characters: The Complete Who's Who in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 149.

<sup>5</sup> Frank E. Gaebelin, ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 4:151.

In contrast to the mighty deeds, message, and legacy of Elijah, he also showed human weakness. For much of his ministry he was very lonely. He confronted wicked Ahab by himself, went into hiding by himself, and confronted the prophets of Baal by himself (1 Kgs 19:14). Fortunately, the loneliness of the tired and burned out prophet Elijah finally reached a turning point after he encountered God in the cleft of the rock (1 Kgs 19:11-12). "His work would not be alone from this point forth, but performed alongside other faithful prophets."<sup>6</sup> The NT affirms Elijah's human nature in when it reads, "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain . . ." (Jas 5:17-18). James was exhorting his readers to pray fervently and earnestly because they, too, have the potential to effect incredible results through their prayer life.

#### *The Miracle of Provision (1 Kgs 17:8-16)*

The first chosen biblical text tucks a story of mercy right into the middle of Elijah's bold pronouncements and battles with Israel's leadership. The context leading up to this miracle story is one of crisis on multiple fronts. Israel's "King Ahab, after he married a Phoenician princess Jezebel, installed Baalism as the official religion of the northern kingdom."<sup>7</sup> There is no doubt that idolatry, including mixing worship of Yahweh with practices associated with the golden calf cult as well as the "storm god"

<sup>6</sup> Gardner, *Encyclopedia of Bible Characters*, 152.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: MI, Zondervan, 1991), 209.

Baal, were not uncommon in Israel prior and up to this time.<sup>8</sup> "But after Jezebel's arrival, instead of being a hidden superstition, the religion of Baal became an openly avowed and militant force threatening the whole religion and moral tradition of Israel."<sup>9</sup> The Bible records that she even had the prophets of Yahweh killed, demonstrating the extent of her deception and ruthlessness (1 Kgs 18:13).

Elijah could not stand the violence against Yahweh and His people anymore! He boldly declared to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word" (1 Kgs 17:1). Following Elijah's pronouncement to Ahab, God instructed Elijah to go into hiding at the Brook Cherith where he was supernaturally sustained by water from the brook and ravens, which brought him food. But the brook dried up after some time (1 Kgs 17:7). After these events, the story unfolds,

Then the word of the Lord came to him [Elijah], saying, "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink." And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." So she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die." And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. For thus says the LORD God of Israel: "The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth." So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah (1 Kgs 17:8-16).

<sup>8</sup> Hill and Walton, *Old Testament*, 213.

<sup>9</sup> Ronald S. Wallace, *Elijah and Elisha: Expositions from the Book of Kings* (Grand Rapids: MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1957), 1.

Note the unlikelihood of Yahweh<sup>10</sup> sending Elijah to such a place as Zerephath.

At the brook, Elijah lived in a season of relative tranquility where he was sustained miraculously by ravens and had ample time alone with God. But now the LORD was sending him to the very area where Jezebel and Baalism came from — to a heathen people who worshipped false gods! Not only was Yahweh sending Elijah to the people who worshiped Baal, but He was directing him to become dependent on them.<sup>11</sup> In extracting a key principle here, Ronald Wallace writes, "[God's servant Elijah] must have living intimate contact with the sufferings and feelings of those to whom he has been sent by God to minister . . . he must stand alongside them, sit with them, suffer with them."<sup>12</sup>

From a worldly standpoint, the poor widow woman also seems an unlikely candidate to do the will of Yahweh by helping the Prophet Elijah.<sup>13</sup> She was counted amongst the poorest of all people and a Gentile, but as Wallace points out, "We will often find God seeking to help us through those around us who seem least likely to give us help!"<sup>14</sup> This unlikely servant of God also demonstrated amazing faith. After telling her not to be afraid, " . . . the prophet put a severe test before her."<sup>15</sup> If she would suspend meeting her desperate personal need in favor of surrendering her last meal to Elijah,

<sup>10</sup> "Yahweh" is the English transliteration of the Hebrew term depicted as "The LORD" in the NKJV Scriptures. They are used here interchangeably.

<sup>11</sup> Harold W. Fife, *A Man Just Like Us: Elijah* (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1968), 36.

<sup>12</sup> Fife, *Man Just Like Us*, 13.

<sup>13</sup> In the New Testament, Jesus specifically mentions this widow when he rebukes the Jews from his hometown for their prideful and narrow religious nationalism. Jesus highlights the fact that God passed up using a widow from Israel in favor of choosing this foreign widow from a Gentile land to provide for Elijah (Lk 4:24-25).

<sup>14</sup> Wallace, *Elijah*, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Gaebelein, *Expositor's Bible*, 139.

Yahweh would honor her faith with a miraculous supply of flour and oil until the drought ended. She obeyed the word of the LORD through the prophet, and all happened as he promised — the flour and oil were miraculously multiplied!

Considering the story thus far, there are several important principles for worker's in compassion ministry to apply. The first is the principle of radical obedience. After Elijah got the word of the Lord to go to the widow he obeyed and went, even if it was to depend upon a poor woman living a strange place filled with Gentiles. Like Elijah, are we willing for God to send us to serve unlikely people in unlikely places, even to the poorest of the poor, and to be humble enough to become interdependent with them? We should consider a story from Heidi and Roland Baker, two missionaries to Mozambique.<sup>16</sup> They spent their early ministry years sitting with the poor in Asia to learn and be mentored by them. Heidi writes in those years that, "Jesus came to me every day in the faces of the poor."<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, Baker says, "There is something about the poor that delights the heart of God . . . they are contrite . . . they know they are in need."<sup>18</sup> She also notes the reason that the power of God is drawn to them is because of their "dependency, hunger, need, and desperation."<sup>19</sup> May we be so bold and radical as to learn from the poor and never treat them as our subjects but rather our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We might find them helping us more than we help them!

<sup>16</sup> The Bakers are responsible for planting thousands of churches and leading a supernatural ministry of miracles. See Tim Stafford, "Miracles in Mozambique: How Mama Heidi Reaches the Abandoned," *Christianity Today*, May 18, 2012, accessed October 20, 2015, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/may/miracles-in-mozambique.html>.

<sup>17</sup> Heidi Baker, *Compelled By Love* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2008), 11.

<sup>18</sup> Baker, *Compelled*, 10.

<sup>19</sup> Baker, *Compelled*, 10.



A second principle to be gained here is about how we perceive the poor and homeless in our culture. The marginalized people in the author's ministry context are people rich in hidden and untapped personal resource and ability, but are generally only viewed by society as needy consumers of other's material and human resources. The widow from Zerepath might also have been viewed as merely a needy consumer of resources had it not been for a prophet who was led by God to, "call those things which be not as though they were" (Rom 4:17). The prophet Elijah's instruction to give him her family's last meal was a crisis of faith for her. Amazingly she obeyed and a miracle of provision resulted. The key to her obedience and the miracle was her obedience to a simple prophetic word, "Do not be afraid . . . the jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry" (1 Kgs 17:13).

Given the biblical precedent found here, the author's project seeks to highlight the power of the prophetic word to bring people in crisis to a higher level of faith and obedience. A true word from God can give people, no matter how oppressed they might be, a real sense of hope from which they can believe and act in faith. Many of the poor and sick among us don't want sympathy from ministry volunteers regarding their sad circumstances. They want and need a compassionate and anointed word from their Creator who looks past the condition they are in and empowers and challenges them to believe and cooperate with his promise of abundant life (Jn 10:10b). Like it did for the widow, a prophetic word skillfully delivered can give them gracious empowerment to look past their lack and fears, and bring them into the realm of faith that believes God has already provided their need (Mk 11:23).

There is another principle for the training of ministry volunteers found in the miracle provision story of Elijah and the widow. To be as effective like Elijah, the ministry volunteer should be able to draw upon their personal experience of trusting God before they prophesy powerfully to others. Elijah had the personal testimony of Yahweh providing miraculously providing his needs while he stayed at the Brook Cherith before he encountered the widow of Zerepath. With this testimony brewing fresh in his spirit Elijah was able to hear God speak and then declare the word of the Lord to the widow. May we also draw upon the testimony of God by always remembering and declaring the times when God came through for us.

### *The Miracle of Resurrection*

In the account of the second miracle story we read:

Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. So she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?" And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. Then he cried out to the Lord and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him and he revived. And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!" Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth" (1 Kgs 17:17-24).

Of special note in this section are the verbal responses made by the widow and Elijah to the sudden tragic death of her son. After the death of her son, the widow said, "Have you come to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son? (1 Kgs 17:18)"

Elijah started his prayer for resurrection with, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" (I Kgs 17:20). One commentator points out that she accuses Elijah of a sinister purpose, and "her theology of divine judgment is so erroneous that Elijah must act to refute it."<sup>20</sup> OT scholar Michael Brown sharply disagrees with this assessment and offers, rather, that her and Elijah's statements were normal and, "may reflect a somewhat standard, proverbial response to personal calamity."<sup>21</sup> In his text, Brown gives ample evidence in the OT that supports a prevailing theological outlook of generally seeing sickness as a divine retribution for some kind of sin.<sup>22</sup> With the "sickness-is-judgment" view in their minds, it was quite natural for the widow and Elijah to react the way they did. Other commentators further support Brown's view by stating, "The woman assumes that her child's death is punishment from some presumed (though unknown) offense that has come to the attention of the deity because of the prophet's presence."<sup>23</sup>

In the face of such a prevailing view, it is then quite amazing to see Elijah's personal compassionate response to the widow's sudden loss of her son. Understandably, at this point he could have distanced himself from the widow as a person being judged for her sin. Instead, he responded in compassion and mercy, which triumphed over any possible judgment. Elijah "engaged in a simple act of intercession that bespeaks his

<sup>20</sup> Simon J. DeVries, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 12, *1 Kings*, eds. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 221.

<sup>21</sup> Michael L. Brown, *Israel's Divine Healer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 106-107.

<sup>22</sup> Brown, *Healer*, 324.

<sup>23</sup> John H. Walton, Victor Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Genesis-Deuteronomy* (Madison, WI: InterVarsity, 1997), 365.

intimacy and special standing with God."<sup>24</sup> Elijah had built a meaningful relationship with this widow and presumably knew her to be of good character given her record of faithfulness in taking care of his needs. Out of a sense of pure compassion (and perhaps even justice) Elijah made a strong appeal to Yahweh for a miracle by praying three times. The boy was raised! "For the prophet, Yahweh, the God of Israel, could not allow the son of this faithful woman to die!"<sup>25</sup> In a similar fashion may our ministries today push past religious tradition and dogma to demonstrate the power of God with compassion!

The method in which Elijah prays might be of secondary importance to his motive, but it is worth offering as a teaching point for believers to follow. After the widow informs Elijah of her son's death, he immediately took the lifeless boy to the upper room to pray for the boy by himself. An important principle of faith is highlighted here. Author John Sandford notes that Elijah took him up to the upper room to pray by himself for he "did not want anyone who did not have faith to insert streams of doubt."<sup>26</sup> Jesus once did a similar thing when he cleared the room of all the commotion coming from those grieving, taking with him only his closest disciples, before he raised up Jairus's dead daughter (Mk 5:40). Believers who pray for the sick in times of crisis would do well in following this principle to safeguard their minds from doubt and unbelief, and to focus on seeing and hearing what the Lord is doing and saying in the moment.

Thus, this story gives all believers in Yahweh practical wisdom to respond to crisis in a faithful and compassionate manner. They should act compassionately with a sensitivity to those experiencing grief in crisis. They should also firmly hold to their

<sup>24</sup> Brown, *Healer*, 106.

<sup>25</sup> Brown, *Healer*, 106.

<sup>26</sup> John L. Sandford, *Elijah Among Us: Understanding and Responding to God's Prophet's Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen, 2002), 72.

peace and boldly release the Kingdom of God. An Elijah-like miracle of deliverance is likely to happen and cause the people to declare along with the widow, "Now . . . I know . . . that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth" (1 Kgs 17:24). If a miracle does not manifest at that moment, believers would be wise to refrain from becoming angry and blaming God, themselves, or the sick person. Dr. Randy Clark emphasizes that it is important to never tell people they didn't get healed because they lacked faith or because they have sin in their life. Doing so introduces the negative element of guilt and condemnation into a vulnerable situation.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, there are at least two theological insights gained from these miracle stories of Elijah. First, "In the contest between Yahweh and Baal . . . Yahweh demonstrates that he can provide for 'Baal's people' in 'Baal's territory' just as easily as he is able to provide for his own people and just as easily as he is able to withhold from whomever he chooses."<sup>28</sup> Second, Yahweh showed himself superior to Baal in the greater cosmic battle. "As a god who regularly returned from death, it was believed that these fertility gods also had the power to occasionally restore life to someone who had died. Therefore, by restoring the boy's life, Yahweh is again showing his power in the realm considered to be Baal's central arena."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Randy Clark, *Kingdom Foundations Workbook* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Apostolic Network of Global Awakening, 2011), 43.

<sup>28</sup> Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *IVP Bible*, 375.

<sup>29</sup> Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *IVP Bible*, 376.

## New Testament Biblical Foundations

*Background: Word Study of Greek term splachnizomai*

*Splachnizomai* is the Greek New Testament verb meaning "to have compassion" and quite literally means "to be moved as to one's bowels, hence to be moved with compassion, have compassion - for the bowels were thought to be the seat of love and pity.<sup>30</sup> It is quite a unique and rare term and has been described as "the strongest word in the Greek NT."<sup>31</sup> As the ancients assigned figurative meaning to bodily organs such as, "the heart signifying the seat of the affections . . . , the Greeks extended this figurative usage to all the higher or thoracic viscera, the liver, lungs, etc. . . . the Greek noun *splanchna* (literally 'bowels') has its sense of feeling, and especially compassion."<sup>32</sup>

The term *splachnizomai* occurs only twelve times in the New Testament and always in the Gospels. Nine of the twelve<sup>33</sup> occurrences are associated with Jesus Christ either being "moved with compassion," "feeling compassion," or being asked to "have compassion/take pity." In all nine instances, Jesus acted on the impulse of compassion and performed some miracle, healing, or deliverance. These nine miracles can be grouped into occurrences when compassion moved Jesus to heal the sick (Mt 14:14, Mk 1:40-42, Mt 20:29-34, Mt 9:36-37), to raise the dead (Lk 7:11-15), to teach and/or multiply of food (Mk 6:34, Mk 8:2, Mt 15:32), to cast out a demon (Mk 9:22). In the section that

<sup>30</sup> *Bible Study Tools New Testament Greek Lexicon*, s.v. "splachnizomai," accessed Oct 28, 2015, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/splachnizomai.html>.

<sup>31</sup> William Barclay, *And He Had Compassion: The Healing Miracles of Jesus*, Rev. ed. (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1976), 116.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Addison Alexander, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980), 274-75.

<sup>33</sup> The remaining three occurrences of the term are in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Mt 18:27), Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:33), and Parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:20).

follows, at least one passage in three of the four categories will be exegeted and commented on.

### *Compassion to Heal the Sick*

When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick (Mt 14:13-14).

Jesus had just heard the news of the brutal beheading of his cousin and ministry forerunner John the Baptist. Upon hearing the tragic news, he immediately went to a deserted place to pray and be with his Father as was often his custom (Mt 13:13). One can only imagine the level of intense shock and grief that Jesus must have felt at the news of this tragedy. We are not told anything about what Jesus prayed or heard from God at the moment but Jesus was amazingly able to keep this focus on his mission of healing the sick.

Jesus was able focus on the mission by looking past the behavior of the crowds which many today would consider to be intrusive and rude at times. The crowds tracked Jesus' every move and they weren't about to let him spend too much time alone if they had anything to do with it. Yet, at a moment when even the best ministers among men would be tempted to grow annoyed with the crowds and want to quit, Jesus saw their need, embraced them, and healed their sick.

The brevity of Jesus' own grieving process seems to go against any normal protocol here. Traditional wisdom says it takes no less than seven days to healthily grieve and nurse the wounds of loss of a close relative, much less enduring grief of a

complicated nature due to such an untimely tragedy. Jesus' immediate sense of grief was either temporarily suspended and overwhelmed with his sense of compassion for the people, or he received a supernatural healing in the presence of his Father and was freed up in a matter of hours. Either way Jesus could draw upon deep wells of compassionate love for the sake of ministering to others' needs.

People's deep hunger for a touch from God always seemed to draw on Jesus' compassion to heal and this case was no different. "As these were not strangers or newcomers, but the same crowds who had pressed to see and hear him on the west side of the lake, their eager importunity excited our Lord's pity."<sup>34</sup> Further illustrating Jesus' willingness and compassion to heal the sick among the crowds of people, we read elsewhere in the Gospels that, "A vast crowd brought to him people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn't speak, and many others. They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all" (Mt 15:30). The Bible also states that Jesus " . . . went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:26). Jesus was moved by a compassion that reached far and wide among the multitudes of people he encountered.

The character of Jesus' compassion also went very deep. It resulted in alleviating the suffering of the sick, not just feeling bad for them. Author and Pastor Bill Johnson refers to those suffering with sickness as individuals who must know the love of God, and that it is our privilege and duty to bring deliverance. If compassion does not take us into boldness, then what we are feeling is closer to sympathy — compassion's counterfeit.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Alexander, *Matthew*, 394.

<sup>35</sup> Bill Johnson and Randy Clark, *The Essential Guide to Healing: Equipping All Christians to Pray for the Sick* (Minneapolis, MN: Chosen, 2011), 148-49.



Referring to Jesus, Johnson states, "Compassion led Him into a breakthrough — every single time He was moved with compassion, the result was a miracle."<sup>36</sup> May believers become so filled with the mind of Christ and compassion of the Father, that they hate sickness and disease as much as they hate sin. Can believers today be so passionate with a healthy hatred for the injustice of sin and sickness that their compassion rises to a level that is able to alleviate the suffering of the needy?

### *Compassion to Teach the Flock*

The Bible says, "And Jesus, when he came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So, he began to teach them many things" (Mk 6:34). Again, Jesus shows his heart of love for the crowds who were clamoring for attention from him. They were so needy that they would not even let Jesus and his disciples get rest after a wearisome day of ministry. They didn't even have a chance to eat, so at Jesus' prompting, they all got into the boat to find a solitary place for rest and food. But some of the people were tracking Jesus' every movement and they got to the shore before the boat reached land.

Jesus, out of tiredness, might have understandably grown annoyed at this needy group and passed them by to tend to them another day. However, Jesus did not deny their immediate need. He noticed the crowd and had compassion on them. Besides his disciples being described as sheep without a shepherd, Matthew's Gospel adds that they were "harassed and helpless" (Mt 9:36). Only a pastor with a shepherd's heart would be moved to gather this group and begin to teach them. Jesus was such a shepherd.

<sup>36</sup> Johnson and Clark, *Essential Guide*, 149.

The role of a shepherd includes teaching and guarding the flock, while taking notice of the weaker, more vulnerable sheep. Jesus is further described as the “good shepherd who lays his life down for the sheep” (Jn 10:11). He fulfilled that role for all the sheep, both the weak and the strong ones. The narrative above states that Jesus generously taught his sheep “many things” and not “a few things.”

Jesus, who was also addressed as “Teacher” throughout the Gospels<sup>37</sup>, had much wisdom to impart to disciples who were hungry for knowledge and wisdom. The many things that Jesus taught them here are not specified, but a parallel Gospel account speaks of one important lesson he taught them by saying, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Mt 9:37-38). This is just one of many examples of Jesus giving revelatory teaching to his disciples. Jesus showed that he himself put the highest value on revelatory teaching when he depended upon the revelation of God's Word more than his need for food (Mt 4:4).

Likewise, this passage shows why ministers and pastors need to teach and care for the flock entrusted to them by giving them God's Word. Like Jesus, they should see that when ignorance rules people's hearts and minds, it is equal to watching them starve to death from malnutrition. It is the minister's mandate to compassionately teach people knowledge and wisdom using the Scripture, which can make one wise unto salvation (2 Tim 3:15-17). Additionally, God warns in the OT, “My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge” (Hos 4:6). Unfortunately, it seems easy for people today to take in lots of information, but still experience a numbness and poverty of soul caused by a lack of

<sup>37</sup> J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology*, vol. 3, *Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 180.

understanding in how to apply knowledge to life. Oh, how the good Shepherd must long for the under shepherds of this flock to compassionately teach his sheep wisdom and revelation!

### *Compassion to Feed the Hungry*

Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?" Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish." So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. (Mt 15:32-38).

The first thing to note in this account, as exists in every miraculous feeding story in the Gospels, is the deep contrast in how Jesus thinks and operates verses how his disciples thought and operated. Not surprisingly by now, first and foremost, Jesus' thoughts and feelings were dominated by love and compassion. The crowds have now been with him for three days listening intently to every word and grasping at every chance to observe his every move. It was finally time to dismiss them, but Jesus made sure they were first physically refreshed and nourished lest they faint on their way home. At that time, Jesus' compassion moved him to miraculously meet their physical need of food, a need which one might argue to be less critical than the needs of physical healing and spiritual deliverance that he had blessed them with in the previous days. Even so, the Shepherd so loved his sheep and was sensitive to all their needs, including their physical hunger.

When Jesus relayed his desire for the people to be fed food, the disciples wondered where they would get food in such a remote location. The disciples seem to have completely forgotten the earlier miracle when they participated with Jesus in miraculously feeding five thousand (Mt 14:13-21). Proving they had not learned the lesson of the previous miracle, their solution was to send the crowd away to get food before there was a crisis. Clearly, the disciples' minds were not motivated with the compassion of Jesus, and they probably just wanted to get away from the crowds to get some rest.

In both feeding miracles the disciples completely missed the great lesson of faith that Jesus meant for them to learn by their experience participating in the miracles. Pastor Bill Johnson says, "The miracles we experience must shape how we think. Miracles can be dazzling and dramatic, but they are not primarily designed to dazzle us. God gives us miracles to train us how to see differently."<sup>38</sup> Per Mark's account of the aftermath of the first feeding miracle (Mk 6:45-56) the disciples were in a boat going ahead of Jesus to the other side of the lake. Jesus saw them straining at the oars in the storm, so he went out to them walking on the lake. He meant to pass by them, but the disciples became so frightened that Jesus needed to hop into the boat and bring calm to the situation. The disciples were completely caught off guard by how all of this happened, "For they had not understood about the loaves [in the miracle of feeding five thousand]; because their heart was hardened" (Mk 6:52). By implication, if they had properly learned from the miracle, they would have been able to calm the storm down by themselves, becoming

<sup>38</sup> Bill Johnson, *The Supernatural Power of a Transformed Mind: Access to a Life of Miracles* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2005), 92.

deliverers not just needing to be delivered.<sup>39</sup> More specifically to the point, Bill Johnson writes,

They should have seen their role in the [feeding] miracle. Because they didn't see their role . . . the next time they encountered a problem and Jesus wasn't in the boat, they had no solution. Jesus had said, "You give them something to eat." He didn't say, "I'll do it for you." It was at their touch, their obedience, that the food was multiplied. And yet they missed the whole point.<sup>40</sup>

Likewise, right after the second feeding miracle (of the four thousand) quoted previously, the disciples were again confronted for their failure to understand the miracle. Using the term "leaven" for "teaching," Jesus told them to be on guard against the teaching of the religious leaders (Mt 16:6). The disciples' minds immediately became fearful upon hearing this and they reasoned among themselves that Jesus was calling them out because they didn't bring any bread with them (Mt 16:7). Jesus knew their thoughts and thoroughly rebuked them for not taking into account that in both of the previous miracles, they ended up with substantially more food than they started with! Their inability to learn from the miracles proved that their minds had fallen prey to the leaven (teaching) of the Pharisees and Sadducees.<sup>41</sup>

The most important questions these feeding miracles present for those serving in compassion ministry today are, "Will we merely meet human needs with traditional human methods?", or "Will we seek to be transformed by experiences of the miracle

<sup>39</sup> Johnson, *Supernatural Power*, 93. Johnson's interpretation is contra that espoused in Alexander, *Matthew*, 425. Alexander writes, "It is not said that they forgot the other miracle; but what right had they to expect its repetition, or what reason to believe that he would choose what was in some respects his most stupendous miracle to be repeated?" I agree with Johnson, and believe there is ample evidence in the NT to support that Jesus would expect his followers to do miracles, even the "stupendous" ones.

<sup>40</sup> Johnson, *Supernatural Power*, 93. Johnson defines this religious mindset as one that, "embraces God in theory, but not in practice or experience." Furthermore, it means relying upon merely traditional human thinking and methods.

<sup>41</sup> Johnson, *Supernatural Power*, 96.

working God?" Only in demonstrating the compassion of Jesus will we be able to legitimately meet the needs of the poor and homeless, and become deliverers of those in darkness, rather than those who need to be continually delivered themselves. We should be encouraged by the fact that Jesus' once fearful disciples, after being filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, could learn to demonstrate a lifestyle of true love and power.

### *Compassion to Deliver from Demons*

When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him, "What are you arguing with them about?" he asked. A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not." . . . When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit . . . Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose (Mk 9:14-27).

This story takes place immediately following the Mount of Transfiguration experience of Jesus and his three closest disciples. Thus, when they went down the mountain to find the remaining disciples arguing with the religious leaders, they were descending from the spiritual heights of a once-in-a-lifetime heavenly experience back into the world of conflict and confusion.

Nevertheless, Jesus was more than prepared to deal with the disciple's inability to cast a demon out of a boy brought to them by his father. After expressing his distress about the unbelief of the disciples and religious leaders, he immediately commanded the boy to be brought to him (Mk 9:19). Jesus didn't even have to say a word before the

demon violently manifested in terror of the sight of the One who is pure love and light.<sup>42</sup>

The boy's father became desperate and asked Jesus to have compassion on them (Mk 9:22). This poor man was truly defeated with discouragement — he and his son had suffered so many years with the boy's possession of a particularly strong deaf and mute demon<sup>43</sup>, and even Jesus' disciples were ineffective in casting it out. So, the man was at last left with a desperate appeal to Jesus' compassion. Jesus heard his request and acted.<sup>44</sup> Jesus commanded, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!" (Mk 9:25). The demon came out of the boy in a violent manner which left the boy looking lifeless, so Jesus lifted him up to his feet completely delivered and set free! At the ministry debriefing, the disciples wondered why they were unable to deliver the boy, and Jesus told them, "This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mk 9:29).

Thus, this story teaches every believer who prays for demonized people the importance of having a lifestyle of prayer and spending time with God in order for their compassionate faith to result in deliverance. In addition, the manner in which Christians handle and pray for the demonized is just as vital.<sup>45</sup> Jesus treated the boy with dignity and

<sup>42</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 259. Charismatic theologian J. Rodman Williams "Such demonic possession comes to light in the presence of Jesus Christ . . . the evil power . . . is aroused at the coming of the Holy One . . . For the dimension of perception has now become totally a spiritual one—spirit knowing Spirit—the evil spirit in the one possessed crying out in recognition of the Spirit of holiness."

<sup>43</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 259n8. Charismatic theologian J. Rodman Williams speaks of this powerful demon and writes, "The spirit had caused violent seizures and convulsions (vv. 18, 20); so the problem in origin was deeper than deafness and dumbness. Clearly the physical disabilities were of demonic origin."

<sup>44</sup> In Mk 9:23-24 Jesus gently rebukes the father's weak faith by saying, "'If you can?' . . . 'Everything is possible for one who believes.' Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, 'I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!'" Even when one's faith is weak and shaky, knowing the extent of Jesus' compassion makes it easier to call out for the grace of a stronger, perfect faith.

<sup>45</sup> Randy Clark, *Ministry Team Training Manual* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Apostolic Network of Global Awakening), 113-37. This chapter on the subject of deliverance details a 10-step deliverance model based on the teaching of Argentinean Pablo Bottari. Bottari felt that the deliverance model he saw in the

sensitivity, "When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit" (Mk 9:25). People are always looking for a spectacle, and this crowd was no different. Before they could get to the scene and further add to the humiliation of this poor boy, Jesus preserved the boy and his father's dignity which would have been threatened by the presence of the crowd.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

I hypothesize that if those serving the poor and homeless would be equipped and trained to minister in supernatural healing and prophecy, there will be a noticeable expansion in ministry effectiveness measured by an increase in souls saved, healed, and delivered. There must be a healthy and strong biblical foundation undergirding any such ministry model, therefore the author studied one OT and four NT narratives. The aim is to see how concepts of biblical compassion and power ministry compel the people of God to take the risk of engaging in supernatural ministry rather than ignoring needs which are impossible to meet in the natural.

The biblical passages studied provided salient examples of Elijah and Jesus demonstrating Godly compassion by doing miraculous acts of power and revelation. In each case, their desire to love and obey God led to actions that alleviated human suffering via a direct translation of Holy Spirit power to deliver the person(s) in need.<sup>46</sup> In doing so the lost were brought to God by not only words but also by power. When Elijah had

early crusades of Evangelist Carlos Anacondia were noisy, difficult, lengthy, and often humiliating to the demonized person. His model seeks to correct those excesses and abuses, and remain effective.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 378. Williams observes, "Miracles were never done in the NT . . . simply as a display of power, but invariably because of a compelling need. The motive again and again was compassion." There seems to be a great danger and real possibility to "doing miracles" that aren't sanctioned by God (see Jesus' warning in Mt 7:21-23). Doing miracles out of compassion seems to be a good safeguard.



raised the widow of Zerephath's son to life it was an act of power — her son's resurrection, which confirmed the truth of God's word from the prophet's mouth. Likewise, Jesus was moved with compassion for the harassed and helpless sheep so he ministered to them in supernatural healing, deliverance, food multiplication, and revelation of truth.

I believe that many of us serving in compassion ministry today fail to step out in true compassion due to fear or ignorance, so we don't often see God confirming his word with demonstrations of supernatural power. This project aims to impart confidence for and a vision of supernatural ministry to a group of compassion ministry volunteers who are largely unexposed to the possibilities doing signs, wonders, and miracles. After receiving training, I envision ministry volunteers beginning to heal the sick and to prophesy to those outside the four walls of the church, namely the poor and homeless. Teaching them the revealed Word of God, delivering those afflicted with demons, supernaturally multiplying resources, and even raising the dead may all be part and parcel of this outreach, but this project will focus on measuring prayer for physical healing and giving personal prophesy.

In closing, this biblical foundation chapter ties together the concept of true compassion (resulting in action) with the promise and presence of God working through us to accomplish impossible things. Heidi Baker offers the simple yet rich secret — all fruitfulness flows from intimacy with God. She exhorts, "We are called to be carriers of His glory. It's not about standing up and being an eloquent speaker. It's about being so close to the heart of God that you know what He's thinking. Then you're not afraid to go

anywhere and say anything. The Lord Himself will do anything for radical lovers."<sup>47</sup> I fully agree and aim to be closer to the heart of God so that I may see him work more powerfully in and through my life.

<sup>47</sup> Rolland and Heidi Baker, *Always Enough: God's Miraculous Provision Among the Poorest Children on Earth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen, 2003), 175.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS**

The author's ministry context is outreach toward the poor and marginalized populations in the local urban environment. The problem being addressed is an apparent lack of a regular and consistent demonstration of Holy Spirit power in the form of salvations, healings, and deliverances in the church's ministry to the city's poor and homeless communities.

A great leader in Church history, who had a powerful and effective ministry to the poor and marginalized was John Wesley (1703-1791), the founder and leader of the Methodist movement. He was born in Epworth, England to father, Samuel, an Anglican minister and to mother, Susanna, a brilliant woman who tirelessly taught John and his large group of brothers and sisters the ways of the Lord. Wesley states regarding his upbringing, ". . . from a child I was taught to love and reverence the Scriptures . . . and, next to these, to esteem the primitive Fathers, the writers of the first three centuries."<sup>1</sup>

Wesley graduated from Oxford with the highest degree of his day and eventually grew a small ministry from humble beginnings into a thriving network of holy societies throughout Great Britain and America. This author chose to study Wesley because of his profoundly effective ministry to the poor as well as his openness to personal spiritual

<sup>1</sup> John Wesley, *Wesley's Works*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), 13:272.

experiences, which became an important factor in setting the stage for the Pentecostal/charismatic movement in the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter will reflect on the history of John Wesley's ministry, and focus specifically on the development of Wesley's ministry to the poor. In the first section I will deal with his early formation at Oxford and how it inculcated a theological and practical ministry basis for his ministry to the poor. Second, I will comment on a few of the deplorable problems facing the poor in 1700's Great Britain. Third, I will highlight Wesley's motivations for ministry to the poor, which included love for God and people, an economic ethic of giving, and his faith in the immediate affective presence of the Holy Spirit. Fourth, I will name some the works among the poor accomplished by Wesley and the holy societies. Fifth, I will analyze and evaluate the social impact of Wesley's good works to the poor and marginalized. The chapter will finally conclude with the key insights that I gained by the author and their application to my ministry project.

### **Wesley's Early Formation**

Before John Wesley had his famed spiritual experience of his heart being strangely warmed in 1738, which was key in launching him as a leading figure of the evangelistic revival of the 18th century, he acquired a rich spiritual and ecclesiastical foundation in seminary. In 1729 he went to seminary at Oxford and satiated his uncanny hunger for spiritual truth. At Oxford ". . . Wesley was first confronted with the challenge

<sup>2</sup> Eddie L. Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity: A 21st Century Look at Church History from a Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2002), 105.

for social work and recognized it to be an essential, inseparable part of the Christian life."<sup>3</sup>

Three students formed a small circle, dubbed Oxford's Holy Club, ". . . for the study of the classics and of the New testament and for the cultivation of piety."<sup>4</sup> Wesley quickly became the leader of this group, and they ". . . read books for edification, especially those of Thomas 'a Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, and William Law."<sup>5</sup> These writers, influenced by medieval Catholic theology, saw the poor in ". . . traditional terms as *pauperes Christi*, especially close to Christ."<sup>6</sup> This mindset became so important to Wesley that historian John Walsh says,

Perhaps Wesley's greatest legacy was a simple one: to revive the medieval conception of the poor man as especially dear to Christ, . . . to restore to the forefront of Christian consciousness the significance of Matthew 25, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison and did not minister to thee?"<sup>7</sup>

In further readings on church history, Wesley ". . . gained a romantic view of the primitive church as a kind of extended family, bonded together by love, sharing its resources and prizing its poor as the 'treasure of the Church.'"<sup>8</sup> These radical values of sharing wealth with the poor and strict avoidance of even the appearance of possessiveness or desire for riches stood in contrast to the culture of Wesley's day.

<sup>3</sup> Manfred Marquardt, *John Wesley's Social Ethics: Praxis and Principles* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992), 23.

<sup>4</sup> John Wesley, *The Journal of John Wesley*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock (London: The Epworth Press, 1938), 1:6.

<sup>5</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 23.

<sup>6</sup> John Walsh, "John Wesley and the Urban Poor," *Revue Fransaise de Civilisation Britannique* 6, no. 3 (November 1991): 20.

<sup>7</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 19.

<sup>8</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 19.

Compassion for the poor moved the Oxford Holy Club to undertake costly social work in the city. "The students involvement appeared essentially at four points: in the two city prisons in Oxford, among poor families, in the workhouse, and in a school for underprivileged children."<sup>9</sup> They visited the prisons regularly, preached to the prisoners and provided pastoral care. They also gave direct financial help when serious distress arose in families, secured medicines for the sick, and provided clothing and Christian teaching for deprived children. They supplemented the charitable funds they raised by denying themselves typical pleasures and stylish clothing, and by fasting.<sup>10</sup> This upset one of the student members so much that his father complained, "They almost starve themselves to be able to relieve the poor and buy books for their conversion."<sup>11</sup>

The Oxford Holy Club disbanded when Wesley left to be a chaplain for the Georgia colony in 1735, but the effects would be lasting. Arguably, a works-righteousness drove Wesley and his friends. It wasn't until Wesley had his heart warming experience that he came into full assurance of salvation. Prior to that ". . . he had looked high and low for a resolution to his worries over faith and assurance of salvation. He had literally sailed across an ocean . . . and spent years of discoursing with the Moravians to sort out his personal doubts in this area."<sup>12</sup> The Oxford Holy Club's demise ". . . made evident to Wesley the necessity of a more reliable foundation than works-

<sup>9</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 24.

<sup>10</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 24.

<sup>11</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 1:365.

<sup>12</sup> Jason E. Vickers, *Wesley: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2009), 16.

righteousness."<sup>13</sup> Even so, his experience at Oxford set a lasting foundation for viewing the poor as a type of Christ and receiving the mandate to alleviate their suffering.

### **The Misery of the Poor**

There were several factors in the culture of 18th century England that made life very difficult for a large segment of society, namely the poor. These were the days of the Industrial Revolution. The farms, which were once the center of an agrarian society, were being consolidated under the control of the richest property owners, and the workers were moving to the newly developed industrial areas or slum districts at the cities' edges. The invention and employment of laborsaving devices only increased unemployment as machine work replaced handwork once carried out by small household businesses. By the middle of the century, the effect of these and other factors led to deplorable working conditions and a massive polarization between a growing group of people getting poorer and poorer verses a small minority of people growing very rich.<sup>14</sup> Likewise, "The plight of criminals or debtors was especially unfortunate for three reasons: the extremely harsh penal law, the inscrutable arrangement and procedure of trials, and the disastrous conditions prevalent in the . . . [jails]."<sup>15</sup>

Increasing the plight of the poor was the traditional English attitude that ". . . poverty itself was a fault, to be borne as a stigma of divine punishment."<sup>16</sup> Even the Church of England marginalized the poor, and thus the poor considered themselves ". . .

<sup>13</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 26.

<sup>14</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 19-20.

<sup>15</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 77.

<sup>16</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 21.

unworthy to partake of communion, which they regarded as an offer only to the respectable."<sup>17</sup> Wesley passionately disagreed with the marginalization of the poor. After watching invalids crawl across the floor to get at their work he wrote, ". . . so wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection, 'They are poor only because they are idle.'"<sup>18</sup>

Even though he was raised with upper class sensibilities as a refined high churchman<sup>19</sup>, Wesley believed there were legitimate reasons why the poor were poor and that it wasn't because of poor character or laziness. As such, Wesley sought to bridge the gap between the rich and poor. "One great reason the rich, in general, have so little sympathy for the poor, is because they so seldom visit them . . . one part of the world does not know what the other suffers."<sup>20</sup> Likewise, he advised the genteel Miss March in 1776 that she must ". . . creep in among . . . [the poor] in spite of dirt and a hundred disgusting circumstances, and thus put off the gentlewoman."<sup>21</sup>

### **Wesley's Holy Motivations**

#### *A Theology of Love for God and Souls*

It was during the crucial period of 1725-29, through his readings of Jeremy Taylor and other sources, that Wesley first became convinced of the very essence and goal of

<sup>17</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 22.

<sup>18</sup> John Wesley, "Wesley's Forgiveness," in *Journal of John Wesley*, Christian Classics Ethereal Library, accessed December 21, 2015, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/wesley/journal.vi.iii.v.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 18.

<sup>20</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 7:119.

<sup>21</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 6:207.



religion: none other than holy love for God and others.<sup>22</sup> This love would mean, first, that a believer's motives, rather than being self-centered, would be guided by a deep love for God and a desire to please him. It also meant that one could experience the love of God for themselves, but that this love must be expressed as "social religion . . . [which is] intercourse with the world."<sup>23</sup> Wesley was firmly convinced, contrary to Puritan and Pietistic belief, that believers should co-mingle with the world to advance true religion.<sup>24</sup>

Ultimately, Wesley's theology of salvation framed his outreach to the poor. He believed that every person's greatest need was salvation of his or her soul and that every person had equal worth in the eyes of God, who died for every soul. Wesley preached,

Loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength, as having first loved us, as the fountain of all the good that we have received, and all that we ever hope to enjoy; and loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul . . . is the better religion.<sup>25</sup>

This love for every soul should extend especially to the poor, because they can often more easily discern the love of God, due to not being valued by the world and due to not owning those things valued by the world. "This love now forms the basis for the Methodists' aid to the poor."<sup>26</sup>

Wesley moved toward this conclusion through the great pains he took to come in close contact with the poor and marginalized. He found himself outside of the norm for Anglican clergy when he preached to coal miners in the fields, visited filthy prisons, and

<sup>22</sup> Kenneth J. Collins, "The Soteriological Orientation of John Wesley's Ministry to the Poor," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 36, no. 2 (September 2001): 15.

<sup>23</sup> Tore Meistad, *Martin Luther and John Wesley on the Sermon on the Mount* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 122.

<sup>24</sup> Meistad, *Sermon*, 122.

<sup>25</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 8:23.

<sup>26</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 32.

personally involved himself with the poor. In speaking to his fellow clergy, he said, ". . . the rich, the honourable, the great, we are thoroughly willing . . . to leave to you [to minister to them]. Only let us alone among the poor, the vulgar, the base, the outcasts of men."<sup>27</sup> Apparently the high-society oriented Anglican's were happy to grant Wesley that dubious distinction, and in 1774 he remarked ". . . that he had caught the 'itch' a hundred times by shaking hands with poor people and sharing their beds" as an itinerant preacher.<sup>28</sup>

### *Holy Stewardship of Money*

Wesley often preached on the dangers of accumulating worldly wealth and the importance of keeping one's heart and character focused on heavenly riches, namely that what Wesley called holy tempers, which were basically the fruit of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, he didn't preach that money, in and of itself, was evil, nor that rich people were necessarily bound for corruption. In his journal entry of November 17, 1759, Wesley writes,

It is well a few of the rich and noble are called. Oh, that God would increase their number! But I should rejoice (were it the will of God) if it were done by the ministry of others. If I must choose, I should still (as I have done hitherto) preach the gospel to the poor.<sup>29</sup>

The lion's share of Wesley's preaching on the topic of money included frequent warnings and admonitions against the love of money because for him, ". . . riches are . . .

<sup>27</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 8:239.

<sup>28</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 21.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Southey, "The Life of Wesley, and the Rise and Progress of Methodism," in vol. 19, *The Christian Observer*, ed. Josiah Pratt and Zachary Macaulay (New York: J. Seymour, 1820), 752, accessed December 20, 2015, [https://books.google.com/books?id=6J\\_NAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA752&lpg=PA752&dq](https://books.google.com/books?id=6J_NAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA752&lpg=PA752&dq).

[a hindrance] to the very first fruit of faith, namely, the love of God!"<sup>30</sup> Just a few years before his death, Wesley preached, ". . . it is no more sinful to be rich than to be poor . . . but it is dangerous beyond expression."<sup>31</sup>

Secondarily, Wesley declared that riches pose a great danger to the love of neighbor due to the predisposition of the rich person's heart toward temporal things and self-will.<sup>32</sup> Wesley wrote, "A rich man may indeed love them that are of his own party, or his own opinion, but he cannot have pure, disinterested goodwill to the very child of man. This can only spring from the love of God, which his great possessions expelled from his soul."<sup>33</sup>

Wesley practiced a visible love for his neighbor. He was well known for collecting, even begging alms for the poor and then quickly giving them away. "If possible he gave his alms out of sight down an alley or in a doorway, and always touched or raised his hat to the recipient, as a mark of respect."<sup>34</sup> Wesley became a man of significant means due to his book sales, but he practiced getting rid of his money quickly. Speaking about the end of his life he said, "If I leave behind me ten pounds, . . . you and all mankind bear witness against me, that I lived and died a thief and a robber."<sup>35</sup>

Wesley's philosophy about money, however, did not embrace the medieval

<sup>30</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 3:521.

<sup>31</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 4:11.

<sup>32</sup> Collins, *Soteriological*, 12.

<sup>33</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 3:522.

<sup>34</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 26.

<sup>35</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 8:40.

mindset to the point of taking a voluntary vow of poverty.<sup>36</sup> Wesley essentially saw all his money as a resource given and ultimately owned by God that he was responsible to steward well. He radically served that stewardship principle through a three-pronged economic ethic that he expressed in his famous sermon, "The Use of Money," in which Wesley emphasized the phrase, "Gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can."<sup>37</sup>

When Wesley said, "gain all you can," he was speaking of the responsibility to work hard and diligently at whatever the Lord called one to do - all work could be holy to the Lord. In the free market economy of his day, it generally meant that the hard-working person would be rewarded with financial gain. Wesley's primary point of emphasis was not gaining a large financial reward, but was about being a faithful steward of the gifts, time and abilities that God endowed one with for industrious work. "Gaining and saving, therefore, are not necessarily evidence of rebellion against a holy God. On the contrary, they can be, and often are, the very ingredients of stewardship, the prerequisite of ministry."<sup>38</sup>

Similarly, the phrase "save all you can" was not about hoarding wealth, but was about stewardship of God's gifts. Its underlying emphasis was a principle of frugality where one should not waste or spend money recklessly. It included the reasonable notion of saving for one's basic needs and the needs of the immediate family. But those needs would not include money spent for items of luxury per the lifestyle of the rich. Emphasizing an obligation to both God and humanity, Wesley said, "No man can 'afford'

<sup>36</sup> Meistad, *Sermon*, 98.

<sup>37</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 6:124-36.

<sup>38</sup> Collins, *Soteriological*, 15.

to waste any part of what God has committed to his trust . . . which was lodged upon him on purpose to feed the hungry and clothe the naked."<sup>39</sup>

"Give all you can," which completed his economic triad, was about extending the hand of God to other's as an extension of love and generosity. His model for charity was drawn from the early church in the book of Acts, where all the believers shared everything in common and met each other's needs voluntarily.<sup>40</sup> He believed there would be no poor in the churches if they were following this principle well. By taking care to ensure the needs of the poor believers were met, he expected the outside world to take notice and see the love of Christ exhibited.

### *Holy Spirit Enthusiasm*

Wesley had a strong faith in the immediate affective presence of the Holy Spirit, which marked his ministry to the lower class with powerful outward manifestations of the Spirit's power. These manifestations included people falling, shaking, crying, laughing and roaring.<sup>41</sup> Even more common were the inward manifestations of people feeling deeply convicted of sin leading to a deep repentance of heart, and ultimately resulting in a regeneration experience with the assurance of salvation. For these reasons, Wesley was a powerful revival preacher and won countless souls to Christ. Wesley recounted how the presence of God began to be sensibly felt at a revival in an Anglican parish in Everton, "Some . . . [were] shrieking, some roaring aloud. The most general was a loud

<sup>39</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 3:260.

<sup>40</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 25.

<sup>41</sup> Hyatt, *2000 Years*, 102.

breathing . . . great numbers wept without any noise; others fell down as dead; some sinking in silence, some with extreme noise and violent agitation."<sup>42</sup>

Wesley gave testimony of being supernatural healed<sup>43</sup>, and had several personal experiences with the Holy Spirit including the famed occasion at Aldersgate Street in London where he had his own heartwarming experience from the Holy Spirit.<sup>44</sup> In an all-night prayer meeting with his Methodist friends, the Holy Spirit manifested upon them powerfully ". . . insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. . . . We broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.'"<sup>45</sup> Wesley even records an experience that both he and his brother Charles had which parallels the holy laughter phenomenon affiliated with the contemporary renewal movement.<sup>46</sup>

Not surprisingly, partially because of these experiences, Wesley was accused of being an "enthusiast", which was a derogatory moniker referring to someone who forsook rational thinking in favor of subjective personal experience.<sup>47</sup> Regardless, the Methodist movement continued to grow more, especially among the poor. "Wesley offered the poor a salvation which they felt to be within reach: a present salvation, attainable instantly by a

<sup>42</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 2:483.

<sup>43</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 8:458-59.

<sup>44</sup> Wesley, *Journal*, 1:476.

<sup>45</sup> Wesley, *Journal*, 2:122-25.

<sup>46</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 1:271-72.

<sup>47</sup> Hyatt, *2000 Years*, 103.

grace that was free and unconditional, and immediately attested by an inward feeling of assurance."<sup>48</sup>

### **Methodists Societies' Work Among the Poor and Imprisoned**

Up to this point it has been shown that Wesley had a personal preference for ministering to the poor over the rich. This included a passion for alleviating their suffering, as well as a willingness to lead the overall charitable effort by personal example. Some of the actual works accomplished by Wesley and the Methodist societies he formed are highlighted below.

The holy societies and their smaller counterparts, the classes and bands, brilliantly employed by Wesley, modified for effectiveness and efficiency over time, were the mechanisms catalyzing the serious discipleship, growth and sustainability of the Methodist movement.<sup>49</sup> The classes and smaller bands operated in a similar manner to the strictest modern small accountability groups. About a dozen people in classes, or four to six in bands, voluntarily met together weekly for prayer, mutual edification, exhortation, and confession. In addition, a strong emphasis was placed on receiving weekly voluntary offerings given by everyone for the relief of the poor. Since many coming to faith and joining the societies were poor themselves, priority was given to collect money to meet

<sup>48</sup> Walsh, "Urban Poor," 24.

<sup>49</sup> Jason Byasee and Gregory Jones, "Methodists and Microcredit," *First Things*, November 2009, 1, accessed December 21, 2015, <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2009/11/methodists-microcredit>. This article documents how George Whitfield, who was known as an especially powerful preacher who could draw more crowds than Wesley, complemented Wesley for his long-term effectiveness, saying, "My brother Wesley acted wisely, the souls that were awakened under his ministry he joined in societies, and thus preserved the fruit of his labor. This I neglected, and my people are a rope of sand."

their needs first.<sup>50</sup> Wesley was also the master fundraiser for this purpose through his preaching and strong appeals.

As the societies continued to grow in depth and numbers, so did the expanse of needs of the members and their families. Wesley was oft burdened with a desire to help relieve the various needs. He worked tirelessly to come up with innovative, simple ways to tend to and treat the sick, educate poor school children, operate a house for widows, help the unemployed to find work, and administrate an interest-free loan program for members.<sup>51</sup> In many of the chronic cases of sickness, Wesley even dared to treat them with his self-taught medical skills, and did so successfully in many cases.

One of the three main rules of the holy societies was for members to do as much good as possible to all people, in mercy and kindness.<sup>52</sup> This translated into society members regularly visiting and giving humanitarian aid to those in prison. Once again Wesley set the standard to follow by preaching salvation to them, providing pastoral care for them, and advocating on their behalf about their horrible living conditions and unfair legal practices.<sup>53</sup> A single sermon preached in the Bristol penal institution brought change. "The entire building was cleaned, drunkenness and prostitution were eliminated, disputes were settled on the basis of testimony from those involved rather than through brawls, and the observance of Sunday and regular services of worship became a part of the routine order."<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 8:248-68.

<sup>51</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 8:248-68.

<sup>52</sup> Wesley, *Works*, 8:270.

<sup>53</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 82.

<sup>54</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 83.



### **An Analysis and Evaluation**

Church historians agree that Wesley made a huge impact on the 18<sup>th</sup> century evangelical revival in Britain and America, especially through his model of field evangelism, discipleship through the societies, and reversing the curse of generational poverty for untold thousands.<sup>55</sup> Through the formation and activities of the holy societies, Wesley employed a genius methodology, which effectively transformed the masses into a united network of small communities. This network of communities carried a fervent zeal to marry inner holiness with outer holiness that was then expressed through love and compassion shown to strangers and the less fortunate.

A secondary effect of sinners getting set free from generational sin patterns was that they became educated, got jobs, and became managers of their money. Most of them prospered financially and climbed the economic and social scale of society. Ironically, this dynamic created much consternation in Wesley toward the end of his life, and he gave much instruction about the dangers of justifying the purchase of whatever one could afford simply because they could. He did not want them to fall into the temptations of the rich so " . . . he advised them on how to handle their money, on how to dress and on the nature and limits of friendship."<sup>56</sup>

Another major feat attributed to Wesley, perhaps more impressive than any actual relief work, was the altered consciousness and attitude of society toward the poor. People

<sup>55</sup> Charles White and Robby Butler, "John Wesley's Church Planting Movement: Discipleship that Transformed a Nation and Changed the World," *Making Disciples* (September-October 2011), accessed December 21, 2015, <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/john-wesleys-church-planting-movement>.

<sup>56</sup> Vickers, *Perplexed*, 24.

genuinely became more sensitive toward and perceptive of the condition of those living in poverty through Wesley's countless sermons, writings, and good works. In doing so, Wesley played an important role in helping pave the way for many urgently needed social reforms that began to take place during his lifetime and continued thereafter.<sup>57</sup>

Some might criticize Wesley for not doing enough to take on the power brokers in government to affect wholesale changes to the systemic problems inherent in poverty and prisons, as well as the unjust institution of slavery. The fact remains that Wesley did preach, teach, and model changes in all these crucial social arenas, but chose to do so from an inside-out, grassroots gospel approach, rather than attacking the problems through direct political confrontation. One must keep in mind that "Wesley's respect for the institutions of monarchy and parliament and his political conservatism were too pronounced for him to have been willing to engage in any direct attacks."<sup>58</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In a day when clergy were expected to either stick close to their local parish, or specialize in academic studies, John Wesley broke the mold and made the world his parish, preaching the gospel and discipling others wherever he went. It might seem unusual that Wesley, by nature a conservative high churchman, favored preaching to the poor and marginalized people of his day, but he felt strongly that it was God's call to him. This author feels a similar call has been put on his life and thus can gain several key insights from this study of Wesley's ministry.

<sup>57</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 30.

<sup>58</sup> Marquardt, *Social Ethics*, 85.

For the ministry project at hand, this author endeavors to follow Wesley's example in making love for God and love for others the highest priority in ministry. Wesley lived out the greatest commandment through his concern not only for people's souls, but " . . . he cared deeply about their minds, bodies and social interactions as well."<sup>59</sup> Likewise, this author seeks to minister wholeness to the poor and marginalized even while focusing on healing and prophecy in this project. Like Wesley, I endeavor for this project to minister to the poor and then challenged to give out from which they freely received in healing and prophecy.

The author wants to lead a ministry of direct involvement with the poor and homeless, while respecting their unique culture and community. Wesley led by example through spending face to face time with his parishioners whenever he could, whether it was by preaching to them in the fields, by visiting the sick and imprisoned, or by sharing in the meals at the poorhouse.<sup>60</sup> He also called people to live a holy life within the context of close community. The holy societies were brilliantly organized and effectively used to make Methodism a well-disciplined fellowship movement where members cared deeply for one another. This author will honor the community not as an outsider who looks down on them in any way, but as one who earns their respect and trust by being present to them and becoming sensitive to their needs and wants. Wesley's example showed that love is to be the primary motivation in all of ministry, even while he called people to radical faith and obedience.

<sup>59</sup> Vickers, *Perplexed*, 24.

<sup>60</sup> Wesley, *Letters*, 2:308.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

The main theological theme and question related to this project is how best to train and equip ministry volunteers to prophesy and heal the sick, so that they will be able to minister to the poor and homeless with more power. Before Jesus died his disciples did miraculous works under the umbrella of his anointing for the Spirit of God was merely with them but not yet in them.<sup>1</sup> After he rose from the dead the Spirit immersed them in great power when the Gift of the Father was poured out on the Day of Pentecost.<sup>2</sup> From that point onward the disciples dynamically preached and demonstrated the Kingdom of God with even more miraculous power than before. The same baptism of power is available to all believers today who want to effectively minister to the poor and homeless using the gifts of healing and prophecy. The purpose of this chapter is to arrive at an understanding of and biblical foundation for Spirit-baptism; one that will enable me to train and equip ministry volunteers from a variety of theological perspectives.

In the past one hundred years there has been much theological debate in the American church over how and when a believer becomes endued with the power of the

<sup>1</sup> See John 14:17 in *Today's New International Version* (Colorado Springs, CO: International Bible Society, 2005). John makes the distinction of the Spirit being "with them" (present reality) versus the Spirit being "in them" (future reality). Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references in this chapter are from Today's New International Version (TNIV).

<sup>2</sup> See Acts 2:4. The indwelling Spirit comes on the Day of Pentecost when, according to Luke, "they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues."

Holy Spirit within the conversion or salvation experience. However, as Robert Graves, editor of *Strangers to Fire* points out, it was barely over one hundred years ago when American Evangelicalism was unified in the doctrine that held to a work of God after salvation called the "Baptism in the Holy Spirit."<sup>3</sup> This Spirit-baptism has always been based on the promise recorded in the Gospels, which testify that John baptized with water but Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11, Mk 1:8, Lk 3:16, Jn 1:33). After the Pentecostal revival in the early twentieth century brought much attention to the controversial "identifying token"<sup>4</sup> of *glossolalia*, or tongues, most Evangelicals distanced themselves from the distinctive Pentecostal doctrine. In turn, many Evangelicals redefined the baptism with the Holy Spirit by removing any expectation of a powerful manifestation of the Spirit, and accepted the Reformed theory of cessationism that believes the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased when the last original apostle died.<sup>5</sup> Some of the churches in my ministry context have been influenced by cessationism to some degree or other, which meant that this project represented an opportunity to introduce some people to a new paradigm called supernatural ministry.

This chapter begins by looking at some of the historical theological developments of the doctrine of Spirit-baptism and manifestation of charismatic gifts through church history. Second, it will move to review some of the diverse doctrinal formulations of Spirit-baptism that exist across four broadly categorized Spirit movements of today:

<sup>3</sup> This phrase comes from Jesus' words recorded in Acts 1:5 and in other Gospel accounts. In this chapter the phrase "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" and "Spirit-baptism" will be used interchangeably.

<sup>4</sup> Robert W. Graves, ed., *Strangers to Fire: When Tradition Trumps Scripture* (Woodstock, GA: The Foundation for Pentecostal Scholarship, 2014), xxix.

<sup>5</sup> Graves, *Strangers*, xxix.

Classical Pentecostal, Charismatic (neo-Pentecostal), Sacramental, and Third Wave<sup>6</sup>.

Finally, it will make an evaluation of these various positions and then conclude with a new framework of teaching about the functional work of the Holy Spirit for integration into my project.

### **Spirit Baptism and Charismatic Gifts Through Church History**

#### *Early Christianity (A.D. 300 - 600)*

"The expectation of a baptism in the Spirit actually has been rather common in Christian history, although for most Christians it early became institutionalized into sacramental form."<sup>7</sup> Just as there is a variety of beliefs today, the earliest historical evidence points to different ways that Christians in earlier times understood and experienced Spirit-baptism. By the third century, a rite which was separate from and subsequent to water baptism identified the time of the Spirit's reception.<sup>8</sup> The early Western church father Tertullian taught that water baptism prepared the believer for the Holy Spirit, and explained that in Spirit-baptism the newly baptized is ". . . thoroughly

<sup>6</sup> For purposes of this paper "Third Wave" refers to the movement of the Spirit of God beginning in the 1980's among churches with traditional Evangelical theology when it comes to Spirit-baptism (who do not view tongues as the authenticating gift), but who share with Pentecostals and Charismatics the experience of signs, wonders, and miracles. See C. Peter Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit: Encountering the Power of Signs and Wonders* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1988), 18.

H. I. Lederle, an author oft cited in this paper, disagrees with Wagner's more narrow definition, and has himself understood Third Wave more broadly as the whole Independent Charismatic movement. Lederle's "empowered evangelicals" are equivalent to Wagner's Third Wave. See H. I. Lederle, *Theology With Spirit: The Future of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements in the 21st Century* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2010), 121.

<sup>7</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, "Evidence of the Spirit: The Ancient and Eastern Churches," in *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Perspectives on the Pentecostal Doctrine of Spirit Baptism*, ed. Gary B. McGee (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 3.

<sup>8</sup> Burgess, "Evidence," 4.

anointed with a blessed unction . . . and the hand is laid on [that one], invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit through benediction," bringing the peace of God and illumination of the soul by the Spirit.<sup>9</sup> Other church fathers such as Cyprian clearly spoke of two separate sacraments resulting in the "perfect birth" of the Christian; water baptism which regenerated man, and Spirit-baptism through the laying on of hands in which they are "perfected with the Lord's seal."<sup>10</sup>

Early Eastern church fathers tended to view the work of Spirit-baptism as perfecting the saints, resulting in growth in holiness, in spiritual sensitivity, and in combating the forces of the evil one.<sup>11</sup> Basil of Cappadocia (d. 379) makes no distinction between water baptism and Spirit-baptism. For him, baptism marks the reception and beginning of life in the Spirit, a process of spiritual purgation on the inside and outward gifting that enables the recipient to live for the benefit and blessing of others.<sup>12</sup>

By the end of the third century, the institutionalism of the church slowly quelled any enthusiasm for the Holy Spirit, most notably in the condemnation of the Montanists, a controversial charismatic sect. With the conversion of Constantine in A.D. 312 and the rise of the state religion, Christian practice became more formal and eventually led to the quenching of the Holy Spirit's gifts in the church.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Tertullian, "On Baptism," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, eds. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 3:672-73. It is also worth noting that Tertullian himself testified of being acquainted with the spiritual gifts such as tongues and prophecy. See Hyatt, *2000 Years*, 18.

<sup>10</sup> Cyprian, "Letters 72 and 73," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, eds. Roberts, Donaldson, and Coxe, 5:381, 388.

<sup>11</sup> Burgess, "Evidence," 6.

<sup>12</sup> Burgess, "Evidence," 6.

<sup>13</sup> Hyatt, *2000 Years*, 34-35.

*Dark Ages through the Reformation Period (A.D. 600-1700)*

Through the Dark and Middle Ages (A.D. 600-1517) it was left to the communities of the monastics to revive the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit. The monastics were devout believers who lived consecrated lives, withdrawn from the corrupt society and world system. Famous among them are Antony, Ambrose, Francis of Assisi, and Benedict. All of these had experiences in healing the sick and casting out devils, but they also gave themselves to study, prayer and meditation.<sup>14</sup> We can infer from their use of the charisms that the monastics had experienced Spirit-baptism in no uncertain manner and kept their faith alive by the Spirit.

In the Reformation period (A.D. 1517-1700), the mainstream Protestant reformers revolted against the excesses of the papists and made scriptural authority supreme. In doing so, they also excluded the possibility of contemporary miracles because in their view the role of miracles was to accredit Scripture. By inference, they maintained that there were no more miracles after the New Testament.<sup>15</sup> According to Ruthven, the Protestant reformers made the gospel primarily about repentance and water baptism (a gospel of preparation) rather than about the New Covenant gospel of the Kingdom. It is this Kingdom that is entered via Spirit-baptism and centers on hearing and obeying God's immediate voice, including prophesying and doing miraculous works of power.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Hyatt, *2000 Years*, 48.

<sup>15</sup> Ruthven, *What's Wrong*, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Ruthven, *What's Wrong*, 2.



*Pre-Pentecostal Era (18th and 19th Century)*

Against the mainline Protestant reformers and the anti-supernatural worldview of the modern era<sup>17</sup>, some radical groups (Anabaptists, Quakers, Moravians, Methodists) focused on zealous prayer, salvation, and sanctification.<sup>18</sup> This paved the way for new doctrines emphasizing spiritual experience. For instance, John Wesley experienced his famous second blessing which gave him assurance of his salvation, something he greatly struggled with previously.<sup>19</sup> Later, he formulated the Methodist doctrine of entire sanctification, which was yet another transformative event seen as possible for God's people in this life. In this experience, at any time a person could have a post conversion" . . . encounter with God whereby His grace would act so as to consecrate one's whole heart in surrendered, perfect love."<sup>20</sup>

The early Methodist preacher and theologian John Fletcher preferred the phrase "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" to describe this second work of grace.<sup>21</sup> He popularized the language for the Pentecostal experience prior to it becoming a phenomenon in the early 20th century. A hundred years later revival and holiness advocates like D.L. Moody, R. A. Torrey, Charles Finney and their contemporaries were all preaching about a similar

<sup>17</sup> Tragically, the highly rationalistic Enlightenment mindset that dominated the modern era (A.D. 1789-1989 according to Thomas Oden) crept into the Church and did violence toward the supernatural. For a discussion see Lederle, *Theology*, 23.

<sup>18</sup> Hyatt, *2000 Years*, 79-107.

<sup>19</sup> Vickers, *Perplexed*, 16.

<sup>20</sup> Ian Dunn, e-mail message to author, March 24, 2016. Rev. Dunn is a fellow Doctor of Ministry student and pastor of Arnprior Wesleyan Church, Ontario, Canada. Dunn adds that, "Wesley actually testified of struggling greatly with sin after his heart warming experience at Aldersgate, but eventually found peace and consecration of his flesh." Dunn also believes that the reason Wesley never testified of his entire sanctification experience is due to fear of falling into pride and losing the state of grace he enjoyed.

<sup>21</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 58.

second work of grace, but their description of its purpose was empowerment verses inner holiness.<sup>22</sup>

### *Classical Pentecostal Era (1906 - Present)*

Classical Pentecostalism adopted the multi-stage theological framework of the Wesleyan-Keswick-Holiness evangelists when it was birthed through a series of events which culminated in the massive outpouring of God's Spirit that marked the Azusa Street revival in 1906-1909.<sup>23</sup> The manifestation of tongues as a post conversion experience became the hallmark for the Pentecostal baptism in the Spirit from that point on.<sup>24</sup> The Charismatic movement was birthed in the 1960's and 70's as the second major Spirit movement after Pentecostalism. This time the Holy Spirit was poured out in power and love upon people in the mainline denominations including Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran and others. Most recently (1980's to present), a third wave of the Holy Spirit is moving afresh among "empowered evangelicals."<sup>25</sup> Each Spirit movement has either a slightly different emphasis, and/or interpretation of the doctrine of Spirit-baptism, which will now be reviewed in turn.

<sup>22</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 56-57. Thus, the language for Wesley's doctrine of a second work of grace unto entire sanctification was gradually changed to "baptism of the Holy Spirit" for the purpose of enduement of power for service and victorious Christian living. This change was largely due to the influence of the Keswick-Holiness movement of the 19th century. Wesley's crisis experience resulting in Christian perfection was eventually replaced with a view among most Spirit movements that sanctification was a gradual, lifelong process.

<sup>23</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 53-55. Some Pentecostal groups adopted a three-stage theological model of salvation-sanctification-Spirit baptism for power, while other groups rejected crisis sanctification and adopted a two-stage model of salvation-empowerment by Spirit-baptism.

<sup>24</sup> John R. Higgins, Michael L. Dusing, and Frank D. Tallman, *An Introduction to Theology: A Classical Pentecostal Perspective* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1994), 149.

<sup>25</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 121. Lederle defines the "empowered evangelicals" as a subset of new independent charismatic churches and networks, closely connected to the ministry of John Wimber, and marked by an emphasis on healing, signs and wonders.

## Views of Spirit-baptism within Pentecostal/Charismatic/Third Wave Movements

### *Pentecostal View*

It's already been established that Pentecostal theology has adopted the multi-stage theological model of their Wesley-Holiness predecessors and hold that Spirit-baptism is an event that occurs after conversion and is for empowerment to be a witness. The Pentecostal doctrine of Spirit-baptism also holds that speaking in tongues is a normative experience, or expected of all believers. The official doctrine of the Assemblies of God states, "The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical evidence of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance."<sup>26</sup> "Thus, when a believer is baptized with the Holy Spirit the person speaks in tongues. Boldness in witnessing, holiness of life, greater love for God, new interest in the Scripture and other similar evidences may be present, but *glossolalia* is *always* the initial physical evidence of Spirit baptism."<sup>27</sup>

The Pentecostals' firm insistence upon *glossolalia* as the initial evidence of Spirit-baptism after the salvation experience has been the source of much criticism and disagreement, especially from Conservative and Evangelical groups, and even from some of their charismatic brothers and sisters.<sup>28</sup> Pentecostals look to the biblical passages in the book of Acts for support, where it is either stated clearly or implied that believers

<sup>26</sup> "Baptism in the Holy Spirit," Assemblies of God, accessed July 4, 2017, <https://ag.org/Beliefs/Topics-Index/Baptism-in-the-Holy-Spirit>.

<sup>27</sup> Higgins, Dusing, and Tallman, *Pentecostal Theology*, 150.

<sup>28</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 82.

received the gift of the Spirit and spoke in tongues. These passages include Acts 2:4 (on the Day of Pentecost all the disciples were filled and spoke in tongues), Acts 10:45-46 (the household of Cornelius was suddenly filled and spoke in tongues), Acts 19:7 (the Ephesian disciples spoke in tongues), and Acts 8:15-20 (it can be implied that the Samaritan disciples spoke in tongues).

Some who are critical of the Pentecostal stance on tongues point to 1 Corinthians 12:30 where Paul asks, "Do all speak in tongues?" The wording anticipates a negative reply, but the Pentecostal (and Charismatic) view is that Paul sees speaking in tongues in this instance different in purpose and use than the personal use of tongues given in Spirit-baptism.<sup>29</sup> Some have also criticized Pentecostal teachers, especially the early era teachers, for putting certain conditions on seekers of Spirit-baptism such as tarrying, yielding, or seeking for the experience.<sup>30</sup> I agree with H. I. Lederle that this is an unfair and inaccurate criticism of Pentecostal theology today. He states, "Pentecostalism had never meant to use the word 'conditions' as a form of 'works righteousness' to be added to the work of Calvary."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> "Baptism in the Holy Spirit," Assemblies of God, accessed July 4, 2017, <https://ag.org/Beliefs/Topics-Index/Baptism-in-the-Holy-Spirit>. The distinction is between tongues spoken at Spirit-baptism which is primarily for the personal edification of the believer, and the gift of tongues spoken in a church gathering by those gifted (should be interpreted).

<sup>30</sup> Sam Storms, "Baptism in the Holy Spirit - Part 1," October 21, 2013, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www.samstorms.com/all-articles/post/baptism-of-the-holy-spirit---part-i>. Storms writes, "The obvious danger here is in dividing the Christian life in such a way that *salvation* becomes a *gift* to the *sinner* whereas the *fullness of the Spirit* becomes a *reward* to the *saint*."

<sup>31</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 100.

*Neo-Pentecostal (Charismatic) View*

The neo-Pentecostal was the first view and still remains popular among those refreshed by the Charismatic renewal within established denominations during the 1960's and 70's. The renewal itself was estimated to have impacted sixty million Protestants and eighty million Catholics by the year 2000. Charismatic authors representing this view include Dennis Bennet (Episcopal), Stephen Clark (Catholic), Larry Christenson (Lutheran), and Rodman Williams (Presbyterian).<sup>32</sup>

As the term "neo-Pentecostal" suggests, the basic construct and doctrine of Pentecostal Spirit-baptism was retained with only slight changes in emphasis and language. The concept of Spirit-baptism occurring after and not simultaneous with salvation and for the purpose of power was retained for all the same reasons stated above. Additional scriptural support for subsequence is found in John 20:22, where proponents of this view believe that the disciples were converted when Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into them, but were not "filled" or "baptized with the Spirit" until the Day of Pentecost.<sup>33</sup> Theologian J. Rodman Williams holds this view and describes faith as a process where the Holy Spirit is at work in all phases. At the point of conversion, the Holy Spirit is involved making Jesus' forgiveness real, but "there is a certain moment in faith, whether at the outset [of initial faith], or somewhere along the way, when the [gift of the] Holy Spirit may be received."<sup>34</sup> The purpose for such filling remains empowerment for ministry.

<sup>32</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 105.

<sup>33</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 173n61.

<sup>34</sup> Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 273. Williams comments further on the timing issue, "Unlike the original disciples, we may receive the [fullness of] Holy Spirit at the initiation of faith, but *like* the first disciples, we may and often do have to wait for an extended period." Williams, *Renewal Theology*, 274n8.

The slight adjustment made from the classical Pentecostal view was more in nuance than substance. Those coming from mainline churches, who experienced the powerful and intimate baptism in the Spirit, were almost always practicing Christians when it happened, and they almost always ended up speaking with tongues as part of the experience.<sup>35</sup> While neo-Pentecostal authors were hesitant to make tongues speaking the initial evidence, they considered it to be part of the experience. In other words, many Charismatics hold that *glossolalia* is only one of many possible evidences.<sup>36</sup> Other legitimate evidences of Spirit-baptism could be prophecy, bold witnessing, healings, and other powerful manifestations.

### *Sacramental View*

Catholic-Augustinian teaching holds that sanctifying grace first comes through the sacrament of water baptism where original sin is remitted, and is then increased after that through participating in the other sacraments and good works.<sup>37</sup> When the Charismatic renewal broke out amongst Roman Catholic believers, the language of a separate and distinct experience of Spirit-baptism was at tension with established practice and beliefs around infant baptism. They asked, "Were we not already baptized in the Holy Spirit when we were baptized in water?"<sup>38</sup>

Initially, substitute language was introduced referring to the charismatic experience with terms such as "baptismal renewal" or "renewal of confirmation." A more

<sup>35</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 101.

<sup>36</sup> Higgins, Dusing, and Tallman, *Pentecostal Theology*, 151.

<sup>37</sup> Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 222.

<sup>38</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 105.

developed theology by Killian McDonnell eventually interpreted Spirit-baptism as a "release of the Spirit" that is experienced as a "flowering" of the initial reception of baptismal grace.<sup>39</sup> This interpretation broke from the two-stage model of Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal thinking and preserved the doctrine of sacramental baptism of infants as the genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, no one spiritual gift received through the release of the Spirit is seen as having primary importance, or as serving a gateway function like the experience of tongues does for the Pentecostal. Many Christians of other historic sacramental traditions such as Lutherans, Episcopalians/Anglicans and Orthodox have adopted a form of this sacramental view of Spirit-baptism.<sup>40</sup>

### *Third Wave View*

The latest Christian movement to identify with Pentecostal-like and Charismatic-like experiences, while purposely remaining doctrinally and stylistically distinct from them, are what C. Peter Wagner has called "Third Wave." These are Evangelicals who have become open to the full range of the charisms of the Spirit while leaving behind the theology of subsequence and the requirement of tongues. John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard churches, emphasized that tongues was just one of the many spiritual gifts taught in the Bible and available for use. His teaching on Holy Spirit "power encounters"

<sup>39</sup> Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 1991), 360.

<sup>40</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 108.

without the necessity of tongues removed what was a major theological stumbling block to some mainstream Evangelicals.<sup>41</sup>

For Wimber, to be born-again is to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. "Conversion and Holy Spirit baptism are simultaneous experiences. The born-again experience is the consummate charismatic experience."<sup>42</sup> At the same time Wimber was an advocate for additional times of being "filled with the Holy Spirit" after conversion, when the Spirit "comes" with varying degrees of intensity, wherein the Christian is "overwhelmed," "empowered," "anointed," or in some sense "endued."<sup>43</sup> The Scripture verse that is most relevant to this view of Spirit-baptism is Paul's admonition for unity within diversity in the Body of Christ, "For we were all baptized by (or 'in' or 'with') one Spirit so as to form one body — whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (1 Cor 12:13). According to proponents of this view, this didactic passage explains that Spirit-baptism occurs at the time of regeneration and carries more weight than some of the narrative passages in the Book of Acts, which appear to make the Spirit-baptism event separate from the salvation event.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 146.

<sup>42</sup> John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Points: Your Action Plan To—Hear God's Voice, Believe God's Word, Seek the Father, Submit to Christ, Take up the Cross, Depend on the Holy Spirit, Fulfill the Great Commission* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 136.

<sup>43</sup> Storms, "Baptism."

<sup>44</sup> The mysterious two-stage account of the Samaritan believers in Acts 8:14-17 causes the most difficulty for the empowered Evangelical view. Commentators have noted the unique role that the Acts period plays in the transition between the Old and New Covenants and other possible theories for the apparent separation of conversion and Spirit-baptism in this case. For an in depth discussion, see James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson, 1970), 55-72.



### **An Evaluation of the Various Views of Spirit-Baptism**

The biggest strength coming from the Pentecostal view of Spirit-baptism lies in the context from which it arose. At the time believers had a "deep dissatisfaction with life in Christ without life in the Spirit."<sup>45</sup> This created a great hunger and searching that was finally satisfied by a mighty baptism in the Holy Spirit. This was viewed as a restoration of an eminently important aspect of ancient Christianity — the powerful, phenomenological experience of the Spirit normative to Christian living in the New Testament. That being said, the Pentecostal's absolute insistence upon tongues as "the initial physical evidence," of Spirit-baptism cannot be supported biblically as a categorically conclusive, airtight case.<sup>46</sup> This seems also to be the case with the doctrine of "separability and subsequence" as well.<sup>47</sup> Even so, the classical Pentecostals are rightly honored and accredited as the forerunners who sparked a worldwide movement at the beginning of what has been called, "The Century of the Holy Spirit."<sup>48</sup>

The neo-Pentecostals made a healthy correction that brought some balance in their view of Spirit-baptism by not insisting on tongues as the initial evidence, yet established the beneficial impact of "prayer language" such that it was made an attractive

<sup>45</sup> Gordon Fee, "Baptism in the Holy Spirit: The Issue of Separability and Subsequence," *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 7, no. 2 (Fall 1985): 98.

<sup>46</sup> Jack W. Hayford, *The Beauty of Spiritual Language* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1996), 94. Classical Pentecostal pastor and author Jack Hayford writes that God never intended spiritual language as a proof but that He has offered it instead as a provision — a resource for readiness in prayer and praise.

<sup>47</sup> Fee, "Baptism," 88. Fee, a biblical scholar who identifies himself as a Pentecostal argues, ". . . there is very little biblical evidence to support the Pentecostal position on this matter [of subsequence]."

<sup>48</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Century of Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2012), 1. It is estimated that the Pentecostal outpouring beginning at the turn of the 20th century has resulted in the salvation of 600 million souls.

and desirable gift for the seeker.<sup>49</sup> The neo-Pentecostal position of subsequence (the belief that Spirit-baptism is separate from and occurs after the new birth conversion experience) maintains the same difficulty as stated above in that it cannot be fully supported biblically. The other downside to the doctrine of subsequence is that it sets up the possible perception of two classes of believers — those who are "filled with the Spirit" and those who "aren't." Critics of the position of subsequence believe that it could lead to " . . . an elitist dividing of believers into two camps, one spiritually superior to the other."<sup>50</sup>

The Sacramental theological view of Spirit-baptism is rightly credited with being able to maintain a vital tie between an ancient personal and communal aspect of water baptism to the phenomenological experience of being filled with Spirit. However, some have criticized extreme sacramentalism as going too far in giving the waters of infant baptism "magical" qualities.<sup>51</sup> The more biblical approach in the Sacramental construct is the emphasis upon an experiential dimension of power received during the sacrament of Confirmation, which normally occurs in one's teen years.<sup>52</sup> Curiously, though, the seven

<sup>49</sup> I've seen a practical and positive difference when someone seeking their prayer language (tongues) is told they "get to" receive tongues if they "want to," rather than they "have to." I believe the Scriptures infer (but do not absolutely prove) that the gift of tongues (in the application of "prayer language") is available to all believers. At the same time, I believe the gift of tongues (in the application of an utterance given in the church which must be interpreted) is only given to some.

<sup>50</sup> Lederle, *Theology*, 89. Lederle makes this point emphatically and repeatedly.

<sup>51</sup> Dunn, *Baptism*, 224. Dunn further adds, "To all intents and purposes the Spirit became the property of the Church, with the gift of the Spirit tied to and determined by a ritual act, and authority to bestow the Spirit confined to the bishop."

<sup>52</sup> Andres Ortiz, "Catholic Confirmation Explained," About Catholics, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.aboutcatholics.com/beliefs/catholic-confirmation-explained/>. Catechism of the Catholic Church 1304 reads, "Like Baptism which it completes, Confirmation . . . imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark, the 'character,' which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit by clothing him with power from on high so that he may be his witness. "

gifts of the Spirit said to be imparted at this occasion are from Isaiah 11:2, which focuses on inner character more than power for ministry.

Theologically and biblically speaking, the Third Wave view of Spirit-baptism is best supported by modern scholars like Wayne Grudem and Gordon Fee who synthesize Pauline, Gospel, and Lukan accounts to deem that Spirit-baptism is what makes a believer a Christian in the born-again experience. Such a construct has the advantage of making all the charisms of the Spirit and a lifestyle of ministry in the power of the Spirit equally available for every born-again believer.

### **Toward a New Teaching Paradigm for the Future**

Many have grown tired of all the debate and never-ending talk about the different views of Spirit-baptism, especially the controversial issues of subsequence and initial evidence. Thankfully, there are several theologians and teachers who are providing a new framework to view the work of the Holy Spirit in order to provide a foundation for imparting the dynamic life of the Spirit in His full dimensions.<sup>53</sup> These teaching models essentially understand the work of the Holy Spirit to be two-fold in functionality; the "indwelling" ministry and the "empowering" ministry.

The indwelling ministry of the Spirit is the source of a sanctifying work that enables believers to live holier lives. This quiet work of the Spirit is perhaps best captured by the Apostle Paul who admonishes believers to, "Work out your salvation

<sup>53</sup> Two such teachers are Robert Heidler and H. I. Lederle. For discussion see Robert Heidler and Chuck D. Pierce, *Experiencing the Spirit: Developing a Living Relationship with the Holy Spirit* (Minneapolis, MN: Chosen Books, 1999), 47-49. See also Lederle, *Theology*, 187-201. Lederle points out that behind the schematization of the two aspects of the Spirit's work goes back to the little known Pneumatological tradition of nineteenth century revivalists and holiness writers such as D. L. Moody, R. A. Torrey, and Watchman Nee.

with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Phil 2:12-13). The goal of this transforming work of the Spirit is spiritual growth, repentance, obedience, and perseverance. The many biblical passages<sup>54</sup> that support this work make no mention of a release of charismatic gifts or miraculous power. Instead, the focus is on the long term, inner transformation and maturity of an individual's character to become more and more Christ-like.

A different set of biblical passages emphasize when the Spirit "comes upon," or "falls," or is "poured out" upon his people.<sup>55</sup> These point to the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit that equips believers to minister to others. These episodes or occasions when the Spirit is manifested in power are usually short term and are for a specific time and place. Miracles take place, spiritual gifts are imparted, prophecies are given, and people are usually astonished as the Spirit is manifested.

Both of these ministries of the Holy Spirit are essential to the church if we are to do the work of the Great Commission. Many Evangelicals tend to focus on the indwelling ministry at the expense of the empowering ministry due to inaccurate teaching or fear of excesses. Likewise, many Pentecostals and those in the Charismatic movement can easily focus on the flashy manifestations of power and neglect the character strengthening work of the Spirit. "In reality, the work of the Holy Spirit includes both of these ministries - and much more."<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> See Ezek 36:26-27, Rom 8:8-9, 2 Cor 1:22, and Eph 3:16, 17. The NT references that support the indwelling ministry of the Spirit come primarily from John's Gospel and the writings of Paul. See Lederle, *Theology*, 195.

<sup>55</sup> See Num 24:2-3, 1 Sam 10:10-11, Acts 19:6, 10:38, 45, Lk 24:49. Interestingly, Lederle points out that the NT references to the Spirit's empowering ministry appear overwhelmingly in the writings of Luke, Gospels, and Acts. See Lederle, *Theology*, 194.

<sup>56</sup> Heidler and Pierce, *Experiencing the Spirit*, 49.

## Conclusion

At a recent Voice of the Prophets conference, two of the most respected leaders of the modern prophetic movement, Larry Randolph and James Goll, both spoke on how the Holy Spirit has uniquely moved in America since the turn of the 20th Century with certain dominant themes at certain times. These men keenly sense that America is on the verge of entering a new era where God is bringing together the strongest of all the past Holy Spirit themes into one convergence. This "convergence of the ages"<sup>57</sup> includes the sum total of the following: the holiness theme of the early Pentecostals, the power for divine healing and miracles from the tent revivalists of the 1940's and 50's, the zeal and creativity of the 1960's and 70's Charismatic renewal, the rebirth of the modern prophetic and Word of Faith movements in the 1980's, the inclusive theology of the Holy Spirit that came out of the Third Wave in the 1980's and 90's, and the renewal of conviction, love and joy that accompanied the Brownsville and Toronto Blessing revivals in the 1990's. If their prediction is correct, the church in North America is poised to experience an unprecedented spiritual refreshing that is simultaneously infused with a hunger for real faith and holiness, healing and prophetic power, evangelistic zeal and creativity - all undergirded with overflowing love and joy! I surmise that in this kind of atmosphere there would be little temptation to argue and bicker over different nuances of theology. This Postmodern generation seems to care less about tightly structured and highly reasoned arguments over particular theologies of Spirit-baptism than it does about

<sup>57</sup> James Goll, "Voice of the Prophets" (lecture, Lancaster Convention Center, Lancaster, PA, April 15, 2016).

coming into a genuine biblical experience of empowerment. It does not need to explain it rationally, or dictate what it is supposed to look like.

I maintain that a biblical theology of Spirit-baptism must honor and emphasize both the indwelling (acting inside the believer resulting in growth of faith and character) and empowering (acting upon the believer resulting in a manifestation of power) aspects of the Holy Spirit. To differentiate the indwelling and empowering aspects is not to say that the indwelling ministry of the Spirit is not empowering, or that they don't work together hand in hand. In fact, the initial reception of God's Spirit through the born-again experience could never happen without the resurrection power of God involved. Unfortunately, our evangelical church culture at large has settled for a born-again experience without the confirmatory experience of the Spirit's sealing and empowering for witness. This author holds that the only prerequisite to be baptized with the Holy Spirit is faith that comes by hearing the anointed proclamation of the Good News via a human preacher, the Scriptures, or God Himself.

The timing and sequence of the Spirit empowerment in relation to initial belief and water baptism seems as much influenced by the culture of the church as it is by the sovereign choice of God.<sup>58</sup> That is to say, there is a great diversity in Spirit-baptism testimonies, no two being quite the same. At the same time, the modern Evangelical church generally does not initiate new believers with a standard expectation of the believer receiving a powerful spiritual impartation at their initiation. There is a need to return to the more normative model of the early church. Here new disciples are prepared

<sup>58</sup> One can conclude from a reading of the Book of Acts, that there is a certain pattern of Spirit empowerment of new believers, but the sequencing between belief and empowerment seems to be nuanced differently in most cases. For instance, the delay between belief and empowerment in the case of Acts 8 (Samaria) befuddles most scholars who hold to the Third Wave view of Spirit-baptism.

and initiated with a two-part event, which includes not only water baptism for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38) but also reception of a tangible spiritual impartation of gifts and power for service (Spirit-baptism). Any substantial delay of Spirit empowerment after initial faith doesn't make believers any less Christian (or even potentially less mature in the fruit of the Spirit). However, it does deprive them from living in their full privileges and rights as powerful sons and daughters who are able to demonstrate the Kingdom of God with power. Our church culture must be transformed so there is always an expectation that the Holy Spirit will fill the new believer with power at initial conversion and throughout the his or her life. Then and only then will we be able to resemble the history and witness of the New Testament church, which had no concept of an unempowered believer. As theologian Gordon Fee has said,

. . . nowhere does the New Testament say, "Get saved, and then be filled with the Spirit." To them, getting saved, which included repentance and forgiveness obviously, meant especially to be filled with the Spirit. That all believers in Christ are Spirit-filled is the presupposition of the New Testament writers. Thus the imperative is, "Keep on being full of the Holy Spirit" (Eph 5:18).<sup>59</sup>

I support a theology of ongoing outpouring of the Holy Spirit unto healing and prophecy in this ministry project. Because one cannot give what they don't possess, volunteers who come to be trained in supernatural ministry will need to have a phenomenological experience of the Holy Spirit filling them and coming upon them in power. Holy Spirit fullness was the key to the early disciples' boldness to pray, prophecy and witness. The same applies today. Thus, near the outset of the training that this project proposes, there will be a time of teaching and impartation as volunteers open themselves up to being filled or re-filled with the Holy Spirit in power.

<sup>59</sup> Fee, "Baptism," 94.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **PROJECT ANALYSIS**

This project replicated compassionate ministry of physical healing and prophetic encouragement as modeled by Jesus, in an urban context among those living in poor neighborhoods or experiencing homelessness. The poor and homeless encountered by the Serve The City (STC) and Chesapeake Area Shelter Team (CAST) programs commonly carry the burdens of spiritual oppression and bodily illnesses, but many ministry volunteers in the current setting are not spiritually equipped to minister in power. Therefore, this project aimed to introduce supernatural ministry to our context by conducting a weekend training “workshop” with a practical and user friendly focus on healing and prophecy.

The training emphasized a Kingdom of God paradigm, which holds that every believer in Christ is called to pray for the sick (Mt 10:8, Lk 10:9, Mt 28:20) and to speak with prophetic inspiration (Is 59:21, Acts 2:17, 1 Cor 14:1), even if they do not hold the title of a prophet, or healing evangelist (Eph 4:11, 1 Cor 12:28). Therefore, the model of ministry presented and analyzed in this chapter is one of everyday believers doing the compassionate works of Jesus, and powerfully displacing the kingdom of darkness with the Kingdom of God through healing the sick and prophetically encouraging the downcast. These two gifts were key in enabling the early Christians to demonstrate the Kingdom of God with signs, wonders, and miracles (Acts 4:29-30).



## **Methodology**

This researcher's project design exemplifies Action Research (AR), using a case study inquiry of strategy. AR is defined as, "Social research carried out by a team that encompasses a professional action researcher and members of an organization, community, or network (stakeholders) who are seeking to improve the participants' situation."<sup>1</sup> A case study is a strategy of inquiry in which, "the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process."<sup>2</sup>

The broad methodological category of AR best defines my project since I, as the primary researcher and active participant, am seeking to improve the existing culture of outreach ministry in our city by adding the dynamic of Holy Spirit power to the existing ministry of practical helps for the homeless and poor. Specifically, the researcher is seeking to add a ministry component of power in the form of prophecy and healing.

A case study was chosen as the strategy of inquiry so that the researcher could explore in depth a two-day training event (see Appendix A) followed by a ten-week measurement period. The focus of measurement was on the effectiveness of the training event in creating a new pattern of behavior in the project participants, namely that of stepping out of their comfort zones to pray and prophecy over others. As is typical of active research, the researcher was intimately involved with the project alongside the participants to help bring about the desired change.

<sup>1</sup> Davydd J. Greenwood and Morten Levin, *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007), 3.

<sup>2</sup> John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2009), 1.

A small group of context associates served as the researcher's team in helping develop and implement a ten-hour, two-day training workshop designed to train ministry volunteers to give prophetic words and to heal the sick. The workshop attendees included believers who routinely worked with the poor and homeless and those who didn't but displayed interest in the subjects of prophecy and healing, and wanted to learn and experience more. In addition to improving the condition of the ministry context (from one that seemingly lacks power ministry, to one that includes supernatural ministry), another goal of this project was to improve the situation of the ministry volunteers by equipping and inspiring them to initiate prayer for the sick and speak prophetic words of encouragement to others.

On an important note, this project focused more on the change dynamic upon those doing the praying rather than on those who were prayed for. Even though research field notes often revealed signs of immediate healing and encouragement, the limited scope and time of this study precluded detailed research and follow-up with those prayed for. Effectiveness, for the purposes of this study, was more so a measure how project participants took the thought and time to step out to pray for others in the way of prophecy and healing, rather than the degree to which the person they prayed for received physical healing or emotional encouragement.

This project followed qualitative research, not quantitative or mixed method design. The advantage of the qualitative research approach includes greater flexibility in studying a complex human problem such as how the Church can be more effective in ministering to the poor with powerful prophecy and healing. Since there are probably many factors to this challenge, and since there has been relatively little research to this

problem, a qualitative approach was deemed a best fit.<sup>3</sup> Data was triangulated through use of the pre- and post-tests using both open and closed questions (see Appendix B), a focus group interview using open ended questions (see Appendix C), and field testimonials using “prayer encounter cards” (see Appendix D). Triangulation was used to deepen the researcher’s understanding and maximize his confidence in the findings of the study.

## **Implementation**

This portion of the chapter addresses how the researcher conducted the project. In other words, what I did and when. The project was broken down into four phases; the pre-training planning phase, the training event execution phase, the data collection and mentoring phase, and the data analysis phase.

### *Planning Phase*

The planning phase of the project encompassed prayerfully advertising the workshop to the network of churches involved with ministry to the poor and homeless in our city, and designing a training agenda complete with topics, speakers, and training resources. Vital to any success achieved in the workshop was the active participation of two of my professional associates who traveled several hours to attend, as well as a dedicated group of local context associates who served enthusiastically in a variety of ways. There were many physical preparations to be made at our training location, to create a warm and inviting atmosphere enhanced with plenty of refreshments and food. Although approximately twenty churches and ministries from the CAST and STC

<sup>3</sup> Creswell, *Action Research*, 18.

networks were personally invited to attend the workshop, only a very few of them were represented, with the bulk of attendees coming from my local church and some other ministry friends. The small turnout from this outside group of churches was probably at least partially because many of them were non-charismatic churches who don't have a natural inclination to pursue supernatural ministry. Perhaps they didn't relate well to the event advertisement that unabashedly declared, "Healing and Prophetic Workshop." Possibly even more of a factor was not having stronger relationships with the leaders of the informal church network. Nevertheless, the strength of my local church's participation made up for the lack of outside church participation, and every seat in the room was filled on the first night.

### *Training Execution Phase*

The training event execution phase of this project centered around conducting a ten-hour training workshop on November 11-12, 2016. Two hours were set aside on Friday night, and eight hours on Saturday to teach and model how to give prophetic words and pray effectively for physical healing. Thirty-eight people attended the first night of this workshop. Each attendee filled out a pre-test survey to help the researcher determine demographic data, the attendees' experience or lack of experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit, and their baseline of experience with prophecy and healing prayer. Twenty-two attendees attended at least half of the day-long event on Saturday. Before leaving the event on Saturday, each of the twenty-two attendees were asked to fill out a post-test survey and were challenged to volunteer for the second phase of the project. The post-test surveys were a snapshot evaluation of the workshop in its

effectiveness of motivating and equipping the attendees to step out to pray for healing and prophesy over others. The question was asked whether each participant was “more likely,” “less likely,” the “same likely” to hear the voice of God as a result of attending the training. The same question was asked regarding how likely they would be to engage in healing prayer, and in prophesying to others. The post-test survey also asked the attendees about their experience of the Holy Spirit during the workshop.

The workshop itself included five topical sessions, which started on Friday night (one session) and all day Saturday (four sessions), each session lasting two hours. The opening session of the workshop was titled, "Healing and the Kingdom of God." It was a foundational scriptural teaching showing healing as a vital part of the Gospel message, and that every believer is mandated to heal the sick. Themes of the “now” and “not yet” aspects of the Kingdom were presented, as well as the “spiritual warfare” view of reality verses the mindset of western rationalism or post-modernism. I also taught that the Kingdom of God demands a full surrender, and how believers operate in the delegated authority of Jesus when declaring the Kingdom message. I also taught that love and intimacy with God should always be our motive when praying for the sick and prophesying.

The Friday night teaching portion ended and was immediately followed up by a spontaneous prophetic word from someone in the audience that God wanted to heal another attendee from cerebral palsy. It seemed clear to me that the Spirit of God was stirring in the room and our friend with the disability welcomed prayer for healing, so several in the room went over to lay hands and pray for him. Suddenly, the sound volume in the room got louder and the faith level grew more intense. Our friend who needed

healing was being visibly touched by the power of God, reporting improvement in the elasticity of his muscles, and requesting to be taken out of his wheelchair!<sup>4</sup> The faith level in the room seemed to remain high, but after about ten minutes I was getting concerned that my friend was becoming too much of a spectacle to the rest of the audience, and taking the focus away from the planned prayers of impartation for everyone else. So, I charged the team of five or six to keep praying for our disabled friend, and redirected the rest of the group in a worship song, followed by a time of praying in pairs for each other at their tables, particularly asking God to release prophetic words and healing over us. It seemed that prophetic words were flowing, and some instances of healing were occurring. The exciting time of ministry went a full hour beyond scheduled, and according to many testimonies shared in person and on the post-test, many people were impacted by the presence of God and ministered powerfully to one another.

Saturday morning began with worship and prayer followed by showing several video clips of healing testimonies which were filmed in a variety of mostly public settings like Walmart, etc. In this way, we began the day with the “end in view” – what we hoped and expected to be doing as a result of the training. The first session of the day was on “How to Hear the Voice of God,” and focused on the various ways people in the Bible experienced hearing the voice of God. The session was followed by an open discussion on the ways the audience experienced hearing God’s voice. The next session was on “Prophetic Ministry 101,” which covered the biblical motive and purpose in giving personal prophecies: edification, comfort, and encouragement (I Cor 14:3). The morning session closed with an exercise where each person practiced giving and receiving prophetic words. After lunch we covered the topic of, “The Five Step Prayer

<sup>4</sup> This participant did eventually go back in his chair and did not receive total healing.

Model” for physical healing with a short time of practice at the end of the session. The last training session was on, “Treasure Hunting: Putting it all Together.” In this session, we broke the remaining attendees into three treasure hunting teams<sup>5</sup> consisting of four to five people each. We practiced hearing the voice of God by getting “clues” for our treasure hunt, then we headed out to various public venues to look for our “treasure.” Happily, each team discovered some valuable treasure on their hunts and came back to report their testimonies of giving prophetic words and praying for the sick. Finally, before anyone left, I invited them to participate in the next phase of the project. Sixteen initially signed up, but only twelve actually participated to completion. Two of those who dropped out said they were overwhelmed with life events, and an elderly couple in our church also became too busy to participate.

#### *Data Collection and Mentoring Phase*

The third phase of the project took place during the ten weeks following the workshop, not counting the two weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas. This data collection and mentoring phase lasted from November 13, 2016 to February 4, 2017. Initially, the researcher envisioned this phase would only take four to six weeks, but I decided to extend it to ten weeks. The adjustment was necessary due to the busy holiday season, and particularly due to the challenge of communications with the project participants during the holiday weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas. A good portion of prayer encounter data was observed and documented during the week of November 30 to December 6, 2016, when our church hosted over thirty citizens experiencing

<sup>5</sup> Kevin Dedmon, *The Ultimate Treasure Hunt: A Guide to Supernatural Evangelism through Supernatural Encounters* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2007), 1.

homelessness as part of our city's overnight winter shelter program, called Chesapeake Area Shelter Team (CAST).

Twelve of the twenty-two people who attended at least fifty percent or more of the workshop ended up becoming "project participants" in this phase. Each of these brave souls responded to the challenge I issued at the workshop, along with my offer to coach and mentor them in supernatural ministry over the next ten weeks. I focused my attention on these twelve project participants by providing regular (once every other week at the minimum) emails and/or phone calls to offer encouragement and coaching. They, in turn, documented their healing and prophetic prayer encounters over the next ten weeks. A final group interview, attended by seven participants, was held February 4, 2017, at the very end of the project and provided qualitative data, which was triangulated with the data collected beforehand, and analyzed to come up with conclusions and lessons learned in the data analysis phase.

### *Data Analysis Phase*

In the data analysis phase the researcher employed the data analysis tools which were described in detail in the previous section on methodology. The post training focus group interview was with a representative cross section of those ministry volunteers who participated in the project. These seven individuals, myself included, met to discuss and evaluate the data collected in the researcher's field notes, as well as to further clarify and elaborate on the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the project participants.



To summarize, the project hypothesis was that a weekend seminar on healing and prophecy could effectively prepare and activate participants to pray for the sick, and prophesy to others in their day to day encounters with people. This was measured by:

1) Determining the participant's pre-training experience level regarding praying for the sick and prophesying to others, a measure of effectiveness not based on how many were healed or encouraged, but generally how often they normally heard the voice of God and stopped to pray for people. The tool used for this was the pre-test survey given prior to the training event,

2) Learning if the workshop attendee's confidence level grew through the equipping given in the workshop. In other words, did the workshop make them more likely to step out and prayer for others? The tool used for this piece was the post-test survey given immediately following the training event, and

3) Reading the actual prayer encounter reports of the participants in their natural ministry and lifestyle settings over ten weeks, as well as the feedback given by participants in the focus group interview at the end of the project.

### **Summary of Learning**

This section will address what the researcher and the project participants learned from the project. This will be done by looking at how the data gathered answered the key research question, "Can a two-day, ten-hour, workshop-style seminar be effective in initiating believers into a ten-week period of praying for the sick and prophesying to others in both religious and non-religious settings?" The qualitative data was analyzed through studying the data repeatedly, to look for emerging themes and sub-themes.

Emergent codes developed from the repeated themes or issues in the data. The decision was made to let the codes develop only on the basis of the emerging information as opposed to using predetermined codes and then fit the data to them. In this way, the researcher followed the traditional approach in the social sciences<sup>6</sup>. The major themes will be examined through the data in the pre-test and post-test, prayer encounter forms, and the focus group interview. Some graphs will be used to summarize some of the data. I will conclude this section by discussing the ways in which my hypothesis was supported or negated.

#### *Major and Minor Themes in the Qualitative Data*

The three major themes that emerged from analysis of the qualitative data were Holy Spirit Gifts and Impartation (SGI), Impactful Prayer (IP), and the Power of Testimony (PT). These themes will be developed in detail in the following sub-section.

The minor themes that intermixed with the major themes were, 1) increased confidence and boldness to initiate prayer, 2) Kingdom of God, 3) prophetic confirmation, and 4) mystery. More than 80% of the workshop attendees indicated that the workshop equipped and inspired them to become more likely to step out of their comfort zones and initiate prayer for others. Likewise, the Kingdom of God, with evidence of prophecy and healing, was understood in a fresh way as the essential and central message of the New Testament believer. Spiritual confirmation, as an outflow of prophecy, was experienced in the teaching and practical prophetic exercises of the workshop. Finally, mystery as a sub-theme was noted by the focus group as a reality that we need to embrace when

<sup>6</sup> Creswell, *Action Research*, 187.

people we pray for don't get healed, or might even get worse. The themes and sub-themes often overlap and were inter-connected in the data.

### *Holy Spirit Gifts and Impartation (SGI)*

The first major theme and code that emerged is entitled Holy Spirit Gifts and Impartation (SGI). Healing and prophecy, two spiritual gifts which are highlighted in this project, are said to be "eagerly desired" by the Church (1 Cor 14:1). The position held in this project is that every believer is called to pray for the sick and speak prophetically to others according to the need presented. At the workshop, the gifts of healing and prophecy were imparted to each participant, in a similar manner that Jesus imparted the Holy Spirit to his disciples when he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn 20:22b). Jesus imparted gifts and power to all of the project participants through the laying on of hands during the ministry time at the workshop. The specific gifts and dimensions of power that Holy Spirit gave to the participants, as reported in the surveys and group interview, and as observed and recorded by the researcher, was very diverse and unique to each participant. Some participants reported physical manifestation of heat, electricity or shaking, or diminished pain in their bodies. Others received a spiritual impression, a vision or picture, a word of knowledge or personal word of prophecy. Through various means, the gifts and impartation of the Holy Spirit seemed to result in testimonies of renewed peace, healing, flow of prophecy, confirmation of God's will, or some other spiritual encouragement or breakthrough for each participant. Importantly, these same Holy Spirit manifestations and gifts were noted to occur in some of the people they prayed for during the ten-week observation period.

The workshop itself, as evidenced by the pre- and post-tests, resulted in many being impacted and led by the Spirit of God, especially in gaining more confidence to hear God's voice, to give prophecy, and to pray for the sick. Nineteen out of twenty-two (86%) who attended the majority of the workshop answered, as a result of attending the workshop, they were "more likely" to hear God's voice (see Figure 1). Seventeen out of twenty-two (77%) answered that they were "more likely" to prophesy to others (see Figure 2), and twenty out of twenty-two (91%) answered they were "more likely" to offer healing prayer (see Figure 3). Eighteen out of twenty-two (82%) of workshop attendees answered "yes" to the question, "At the workshop, did you experience the gifts and power of God being imparted to you through the Holy Spirit (see Figure 4)?" Reinforcing this data were many attendee's narrative comments which pointed to being physically impacted by the Holy Spirit during the workshop.

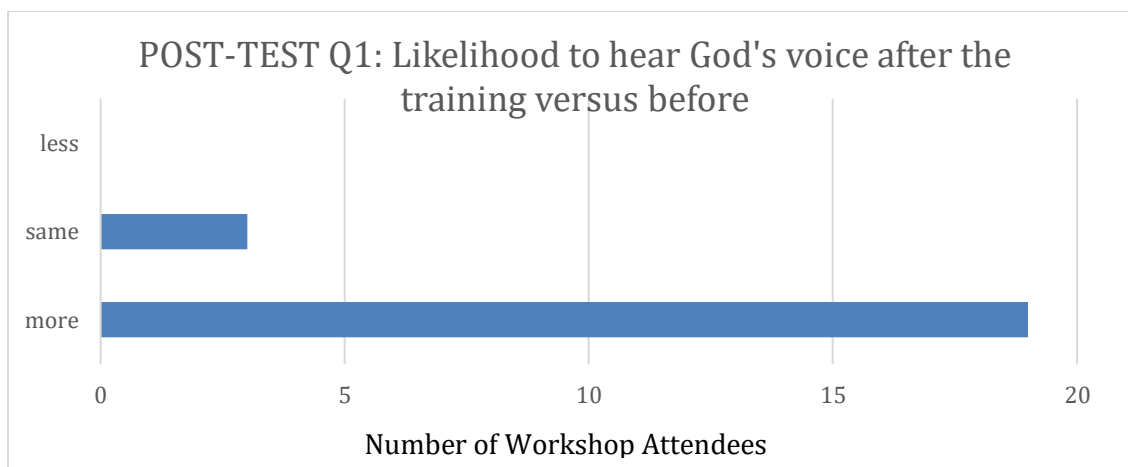


Figure 1. Likelihood to hear God's voice

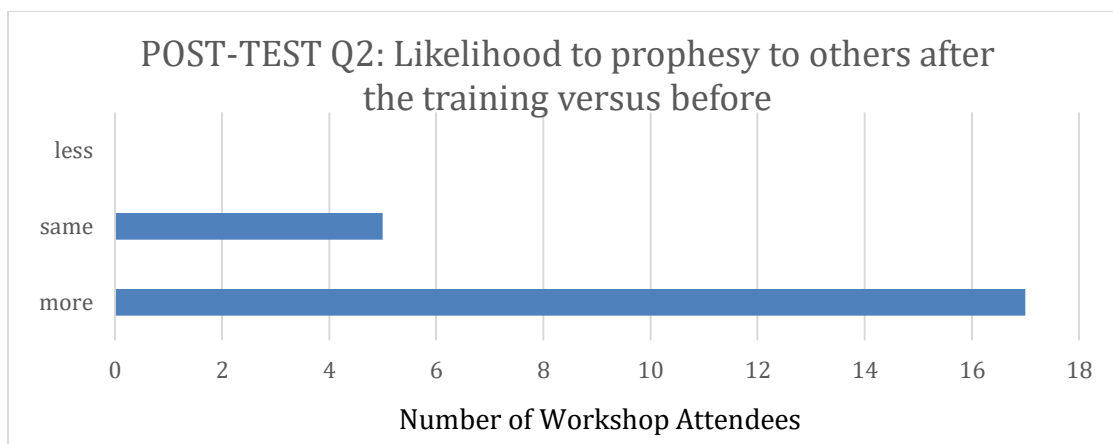


Figure 2. Likelihood to prophesy to others

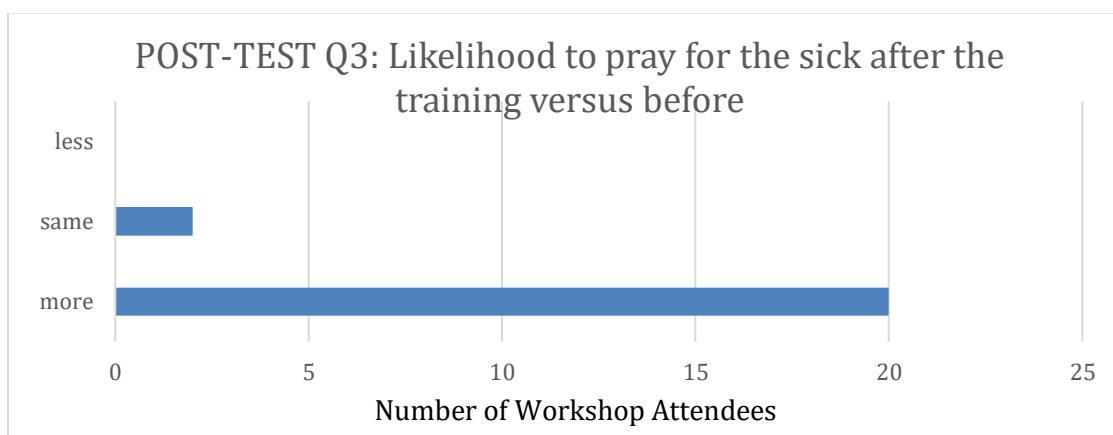


Figure 3. Likelihood to pray for the sick

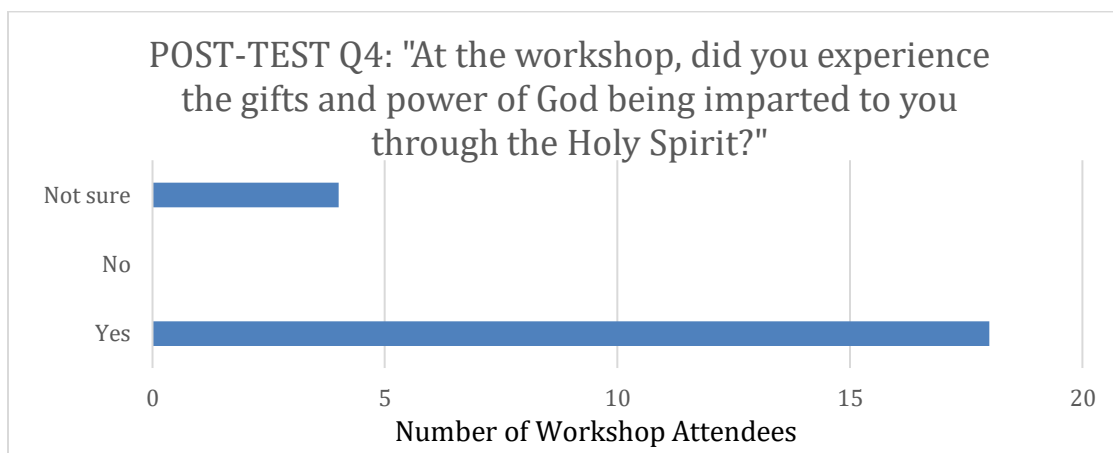


Figure 4. Impartation from the Holy Spirit

There were several testimonies of God's healing power during the workshop, but based on the researcher's observations and attendee comments, the more common spiritual phenomenon was people giving and receiving encouraging prophetic words. Workshop attendee and project participant P10, a minister who is known in our church for his strong prophetic gift, observed on that first night of the workshop, "The spirit of prophecy fell on the people and almost everyone was hearing the voice of God in a strong and clear way." His claim seemed to be confirmed by that fact that nearly everyone, including people like myself and other newcomers to prophecy, easily prophesied in such an atmosphere rich with God's manifest presence. One attendee poignantly commented on his post-test narrative feedback that he was more likely to step out to prophesy to others in the future because, "The workshop showed me that it (prophecy) can be easy, it doesn't have to be complicated." Still another wrote, "The presence of the Holy Spirit filled the atmosphere. Healing was easy, prophecy was easy." Prophecy and healing can only be easy if one is operating in the Holy Spirit, which reinforced the essential nature of Holy Spirit Gifts and Impartation (SGI) experienced that night.

Another evidence of the power of Holy Spirit Gifts and Impartation (SGI) was observed in how the twelve project participants were led, guided, and empowered by the Holy Spirit in praying for people in the ten weeks after the workshop. A total of fifty-two "prayer encounters" were recorded in writing and turned into the researcher by the project participants. Twenty-nine of those encounters were prayers for physical healing, and twenty-three were some type of prophetic encounter. Twelve of the total fifty-two (23%) recorded encounters occurred in a church setting, while thirty-eight of the fifty-two (73%) occurred outside of church in places like homes, over the phone, in places of

business, or other public settings (see Figure 5). The data here strongly suggests a gained sense of confidence and boldness on the part of participants to step outside their normal comfort zone and pray for people outside of a religious setting.

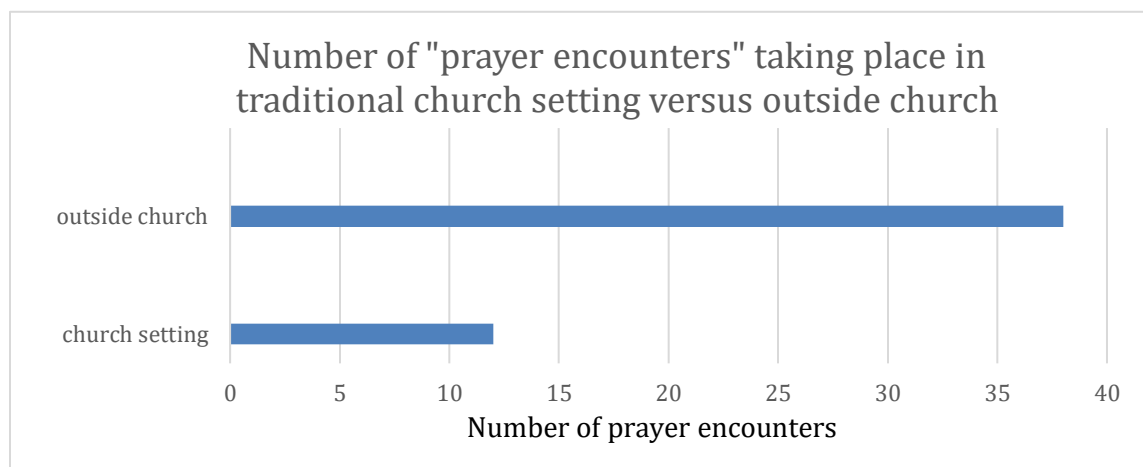


Figure 5. Prayer encounters in church versus outside church

One powerful prophetic encounter involved project participant two (P2) who ministered to a middle age woman experiencing homelessness. P2 felt led by the Spirit to come to our winter shelter program early on a Sunday morning before church, and that is where she encountered Abigail (not her actual name). P2 shares in her report,

A female [homeless] visitor requested prayer for strength, healing from alcoholism, a job and a home. . . I shared with her that God had answered a prayer in the past for my family member to be set free from alcoholism after a 15-year addiction, and I trusted He would do the same for Abigail. I sensed in my spirit that the story and verses about the woman who bled and touched the hem of Jesus' garment (Matthew 9) was like Abigail's situation – I prayed that just as the woman in the bible touched Jesus' hem and power flowed from Him healing her, that power would come from the Lord through me to Abigail. I prayed that the Lord would strengthen her and I saw a vision of a seed being planted in her right then, one that would grow and gain roots, and grow to a mighty oak – that she would be strengthened. . . that as she did the things the Lord was asking of her, she would look back, whether it was a month or a few years from now, and the alcoholism would be totally broken off, but that she had to choose to agree with the Lord each day as He gave her strength to do those other things instead of drinking. . . Abigail was visibly touched during our prayer time, crying and appearing encouraged and comforted. She smiled, and shared about her life. . .

This is an excellent example of a project participant sensing the subjective leading of the Spirit. I can attest that the woman that P2 prayed for was only one week sober at the time and, to the best of my knowledge, she has had only one setback in the last three months, and since has graduated from a treatment program. The impartation of the Holy Spirit that P2 received at the workshop helped her to step out and pray boldly for others, and resulted in even more impactful encounters like this one.

During the same outreach, participant three (P3) led a prophetic and inner healing worship and prayer service for about a dozen homeless women. This researcher observed the stark difference of the ladies' countenances before they went into the service compared to when they came out of the service. Many seemed to look forlorn and oppressed going in, but then came of the room looking very free! I also read and heard reports describing how this prophetic encounter came about and how it literally transformed the mood and spiritual outlook of these ladies. In the hour-long event, the ladies were ministered to as royalty, not helpless women without value. P3 and her assistants spoke words of life into the oppressed and downtrodden ladies, prayed to break off the spirit of suicide from many of them, and saw the glory of the Lord manifest. After prophetic words were spoken over each woman, tiaras were put on their heads to signify their new "royal status" in God. P3 received a dream and interpretation from Holy Spirit, which led her to conduct such an impactful and meaningful service. P3 described the prophetic impact to her, "As for personal impact, I . . . heard that still small voice and obeyed. That was my first dream interpretation for someone I never met and the Lord amazed me with the flow of words that came out of my mouth and the authority and power behind them."



The post-project focus group discussion was also filled with references to the gifting and impartation of the Holy Spirit evidenced in this project. Several participants commented on the theme of operating in the power of the Holy Spirit as a lifestyle, not just from time to time. Participant twelve (P12), a pastor, answered the focus group question, “How has attending the workshop impacted your life and ministry since then?” He said, “I learned that there was no divide between sacred and secular . . . it’s all sacred, therefore we need to be praying and prophesying as a lifestyle as we go [about our lives].” Participant six (P6) highlighted the immediacy of the Holy Spirit, “Sometimes people will ask me to pray for them and I just let it go, but [participation in the project] pushed me to not wait and say I’ll keep you in my prayers, but to pray for people right then because the Holy Spirit can move right then.” Finally, participant eight (P8) commented on a convincing conversation she had with the Holy Spirit while seeing an injured person in Walmart, which helped her overcome fear with love,

I was feeling convicted like I got to go pray for this person. I don’t want to operate out of guilt, but the lady was really hunched over. [The Holy Spirit told me] I need to step out and not be afraid to step out. I kept walking by and the Lord said, ‘If that was you, would you want people to just walk by?’ So I said, “Good point,’ and I went back and I prayed for her and she did feel so loved and I did feel the power of God go through and heal her. I don’t want to be operating out of fear, I want to be operating out of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, the data showed the major theme of Holy Spirit Gifts and Impartation (SGI) to be powerful and pervasive in the participants’ experiences both in the workshop and in the ten-week observation period.

### *Impactful Prayer (IP)*

The second major theme that emerged in the study is Impactful Prayer (IP), especially answered prayer in the sense of when close proximal prayer<sup>7</sup> has a powerful impact on the person being prayed for, as well as the resultant joy felt by the one doing the praying. Jesus promises his disciples, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you . . . I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete” (Jn 15:7, 11). The project participants reported both sides of this promise to be true; when they prayed for people in the name of Jesus, the people were impacted with the power of love and healing, and because of that, the participants were filled with joy.

During the workshop, several people reported the power of healing prayer, in addition to many who testified of receiving prophetic words which encouraged and comforted them. A certain minister who attended from a denomination unfamiliar with charismatic manifestations, found himself guarded and stunned by the energy level in the room, particularly the tongues praying. Even so, after another attendee laid hands on his pain-filled back and prayed, “I’m relatively pain free!” This remained the case for several weeks afterwards.

P2 also reflected on the first night of the workshop,

I did witness two answers to healing prayer last night – Manfred, Suzi’s husband, was prayed for by me and Ralph, and his knee was healed of pain – otherwise he might have needed MRI and surgery. And I had a migraine coming on towards the end of the evening, and Manfred and Ralph and Suzi prayed for me and it went away in less than a minute. So, praise God!

<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this project, close proximal prayer was exercised when a participant prayed directly for and in the presence of the one receiving healing prayer or a word of prophecy, commonly with the laying on of hands.

Another attendee new to healing prayer summed up why she felt more likely to step out and pray for others' healing after the workshop, "Because I saw people healed during the workshop so I have more experience to back it up."

The impact of answered prayer became more apparent in some of the experiences of the twelve project participants during the ten-week project period. Participant five (P5) was ministering to a person who reportedly had been severely traumatized by past sexual abuse. P5 wrote,

I . . . asked the Holy Spirit if He would please reveal anything that was blocking her memory or triggering her symptoms. We prayed for peace to fill her mind, body, and spirit. About 10 minutes after we prayed, she said, 'I just feel the deepest peace over me. I just feel peace.'

P8 prayed for a fellow ministry volunteer working at the local food pantry who was having sciatic nerve pain running down the back of her leg. P8 shared, "I reached down and put my hand on the back of her leg and said, 'We command the pain to leave in the name of Jesus,' and as soon as I had taken my hand off of her she said, 'I believe the pain is already gone!'"

Participant seven (P7) was leading a treasure hunt with a former student of his in a former youth ministry (now a grown adult and mother) and her fourteen-year-old daughter. The mother called Jasmine was prayed for by P7 for healing of an intestinal problem. A week later participant P7 emailed,

Jasmine was healed. On our treasure hunt, out in the parking lot, we prayed for her family, but also for her tummy. She is so thin, because she can't touch gluten or dairy, the two things with calories. The next day, with some fear of presuming on God, she had a piece of toast. No pain. Next day [she had] toast [again], no pain. Next day [she had] a quesadilla (gluten and dairy!!), no pain. So for a grand finale Jasmine took [her daughter] to Dairy Queen for ice cream. No pain!

It is satisfying to report such dramatic results. In fact, participants reported observing at least some degree of physical healing take place in fourteen out of the twenty-nine (48%) healing prayer encounters. Four participants (14%) recorded encounters where there was at least an eighty percent or more reduction in pain or other symptoms. Full and immediate healing, in most cases, did not occur, but if given the opportunity to follow up with everyone prayed for, those numbers could possibly improve. Measuring the effects or percentages of healing occurring was not the primary focus of this study, but rather the focus was on the overall impact to the lifestyle of risk-taking with healing prayer and prophecy on the part of the project participants.

Percentages of a reported immediate impact was more common in the prophetic prayer encounters. In eighteen out of twenty-three (73%) prophetic prayer encounters, participants reportedly observed some sort of spiritual encouragement being received by those prayed for in the way of prophetic confirmation, inner healing, and/or deliverance.

It's also appropriate to mention at this point that the workshop attempted to model unconditional love as the absolute highest and most noble motive for praying, regardless of the immediate physical answers to prayers. P12 noted this particularly well in the focus group interview,

The inspiration I received [from the workshop] was as good as any tool I got . . . whenever I have an encounter . . . , whether there is an instant manifestation or not, the most important thing is that the person felt loved when they came away from the encounter . . . It also takes away any performance anxiety that if something doesn't happen in this moment, I'm not a failure. We are not a failure if we show the people the love of God.

The overall data from the pre- and post-tests, encounter cards, and focus group suggest that the power of love was felt in most, if not all, of the prayer encounters. The strongest validation of this for me came from the founder of the city's homeless outreach.

She routinely makes rounds to visit all the host churches, and when she visited us on our last night of hosting the homeless, she observed several of the project participants serving and praying for people. She said emphatically, “I can really feel the tangible love of God here.”

Not only was the power of love on display through the dynamic of prayer, but also an abundance of joy and trust in God on behalf in at least one of the project participants. P2 reflects on her prophetic encounter with Mary,

I was intrigued to see the Lord show me as I prayed for Mary, that He was answering right then, by planting a seed of strength inside of her. She asked, I prayed, and the Lord moved. This was tremendously encouraging to me, leading me to want to do His work more and more – because I realized for the first time that it is like a food to me, and I realized what the Lord meant, when Jesus said: ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me’ John 4:34. I was built up in my spirit, trusting that God loves to use me for prayer and spiritual warfare and prophecy for others.

P2’s comment summarized well what many of the participants reported — that impactful prayer resulted in great joy!

### *Power of Testimony (PT)*

The third and final major theme that became apparent through studying the data is coded Power of Testimony (PT). There is a subtle verse in the book of Revelation that has much power and truth regarding the power of giving testimony to God’s work. The angel spoke to John, “Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10). The central idea of this verse applied to the project was when a person spoke, or “testified,” about an answered prayer or something amazing Jesus had accomplished in their lives, there was prophetic potential in their words, enabling the testimony to be replicated for others in a repeated, or chain reaction, manner. This

dynamic was observed in some form or fashion in the workshop, during the ten-week observation period, and reflected in the focus group interview.

During the workshop, I purposely scattered in about a dozen healing testimonies via video clips to build faith and excitement for what God could do through the attendees. Most of the testimonies were from a good friend, Bill Wise, and his family who routinely pray for people wherever they go, and often see amazing results of instantaneous healing. Several of the workshop attendees mentioned how encouraging those were, and how seeing them built an atmosphere of faith in the room. While I was hoping these testimonies would build faith in the attendees' ability to do the same as Bill and his family, it later occurred to me that I should have had anyone with a similar illness shown in the video clip to stand in faith for their healing. That was probably a missed opportunity. Nevertheless, there were several that received a healing touch in the workshop, as previously mentioned, and several noted how they received a revelation that they too can operate in the delegated authority of Jesus and displace the devil's kingdom by bringing the Kingdom of God into situation wherever they go.

Project participant (P9), who was formerly homeless for almost a year in the recent past, shared a very powerful testimony with our homeless guests how the Lord sustained her through that period of homelessness and how she was ultimately delivered out of it by the Lord. In fact, many of those listening in the service that night knew her personally and had made the church shelter circuit with her two years previous, which made her testimony that much more applicable to them. It is difficult to measure the impact of her testimony, but the researcher observed several shed tears in what clearly seemed to be an atmosphere of hope and joy created by her prophetic message and

testimony. Several weeks later I connected with some of our homeless guests who still appreciated her testimony.

Several participants reflected on the power of testimony during the final group interview. P12 spoke about receiving a healing while working out in the gym, and then having the testimony of that healing bear fruit in another time and location. He said,

The gym is my place where I have lots of encounters . . . I was on a machine Friday a week ago. I had injured my shoulder three months ago playing racquetball, still in the rehab phase at that point and there was this man called J. who I've been ministering to . . . it wasn't a prophetic thing at that moment, but I reached through the machine and grabbed his hand and prayed for him, and then suddenly I realized there was no pain in my shoulder! I thought, 'wait a second,' and said, 'J. hey come back over here God just healed me!' . . . Then the testimony of this thing just went . . . just on Tuesday morning I'm at my morning bible study at Krispy Kreme and I see a young man behind the counter named T. who's been having questions about the bible, and I said T., 'Let me tell you a story . . .' His eyes get real big and says his shoulder is killing him from this construction job and so I'm holding up the line reaching over the cash register praying for him and with just a real short prayer, 'Lord just touch him.' He looks at me with wide eyes like I'm not sure what just happened, but he came away from that encounter feeling loved.

This is a very poignant example of the power of testimony and an increased confidence in praying for others. A week later, I heard the donut shop employee say that he forgot all about the pain in his shoulder after prayer.

A final example comes from P8 who reflected on the power of testimony she experienced in this project,

The more we give testimonies it helps other people out. The more God allows us to have breakthroughs, the more people will call us to get prayers through. Not every believer has that kind of favor . . . the more testimonies are given for God's glory, the more opportunities we will get.

Thus, a careful study and analysis of data derived from the pre- and post-tests, and testimonies of the project participants support the finding that Power of Testimony (PT),

as well as Holy Spirit Gifts and Impartation (SGI), and Impactful Prayer (IP), were three main themes that rose to the surface.

According to the post-project focus group interview (see Appendix E) with six of the project participants, the workshop was successful in “jumpstarting,” or activating them to, 1) Step out and pray for people when prompted by the Spirit earlier and more often than they did before, 2) Think more in line with a Kingdom worldview where they see themselves as the divine appointment rather than passively waiting on God to bring prayer opportunities their way, 3) Grow in faith in the immediacy of the Holy Spirit – that God can move through them in the spur of the moment, 4) Realize the power of giving testimony and how testimonies can build faith and lead to more opportunities, and 5) Understand more clearly the importance of trust, perseverance, and patience when healing does not manifest through their prayers, or when people reject their offers to pray and prophesy.

Now the researcher will conclude this chapter by tying together the research with the project hypothesis, and answer the question of how well the project worked, including valuable lessons learned and what could have been done differently.

## **Conclusion**

The researcher was motivated to conduct this project to improve the effectiveness of local church outreaches to the homeless and poor citizens in our city. The network of local churches working with the poor and homeless mostly focus on meeting temporal and social needs, and the researcher desired to see some core spiritual needs met through prophetic encouragement and healing prayer. The researcher designed a two-day, ten-



hour, workshop to which he invited those from churches within the network described above, including the church to which he belongs, and some past and present ministry associates. Thirty-eight people from several local churches attended the opening sessions on the first night, and most of them were charismatic Christians from my local church, and were at least somewhat familiar with the subject matter. Of the thirty-eight who attended the first night, twenty-two attended the next day and completed at least half of the workshop. A dozen attendees stayed for the entire training and the same number volunteered to participate in the next phase of the project, which took place in the ten-week period following the workshop. The assignment given to these twelve participants was to pray for healing and give prophetic encouragement to people wherever and whenever prompted by the Holy Spirit, as they saw modeled at the workshop, and write down some key reflections about their encounters. In turn, my job was to encourage and mentor them through the process as much as possible, while collecting their prayer encounter reports. A final focus group was held to summarize lessons learned and to help the researcher determine how successful the project was.

The primary research question going into the study was whether attending a weekend seminar on healing and prophecy could effectively activate project participants into a period of initiating healing prayer and prophecy with more frequency than they did prior to attending the workshop. Unfortunately, the wording of the answers to pre-test questions eight and nine was too general to yield data which could answer the “frequency” part of the hypothesis more conclusively. In other words, using the relative terms “seldom, sometimes, often, daily” for answer choices made it impossible to mathematically measure increase or decrease of prayer frequency in the ten week

observation period after the workshop compared with the baseline data. It would have been preferable, in this regard, if the pre-test solicited answers in terms of exact numbers instead of generalities. Even with this limitation in view, based on the satisfactory amount of qualitative testimonial data collected, the researcher believes that the final and overall analysis strongly supports his hypothesis in the affirmative. That is, a triangulation of the data strongly suggests that all project participants intentionally operated in the supernatural gifts of healing and/or prophecy at some point over the ten-week observation and mentoring period, and most of them seemed to do so more often than they did before the training. The research suggests that one participant (P4) was jumpstarted in practicing these gifts for the first time. In the case of another seven participants (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8, P12), it could be said they saw a marked increase in the intentionality and impact of prayers, and still possibly another four participants (P3, P9, P10, P11) maintained the high rate of prayer activity and impact during the ten weeks that they were practicing beforehand. Admittedly, there were five participants who initially signed up to participate in the measurement phase of the project that did not actually participate due to various reasons, some still not known. Three of them told me they just got overcome by life events and could not participate. Of those three participants, two of them pointed to a lack of sufficient comfort and clarity in the use of the five-step prayer model as one reason that might have been a barrier for their participation in the project measurement phase. Still, of the group of twelve that actually participated, the workshop seemed to provide sufficient motivation and equipping for several of them to regularly initiate prayer encounters in the weeks following the training event. To put it in modern vernacular, some participants went from a mindset of sort of

hoping for God to bring them “divine appointments” to a mindset of positioning themselves “as the divine appointment” just waiting for an opportunity to reach out and pray for the sick, or prophetically encourage someone.

Perhaps the biggest limitation of the project was in the scope of impact to the intended target audience, the poor and homeless. While this study occurred over the same time that our local church hosted the homeless in the overnight shelter, and during which we saw a good deal of positive impact through prophetic and healing ministry, the researcher did not see this translate as well to local churches outside his own. This, of course, was primarily due to a lack of representation of these churches at the workshop. So, the question becomes, how could attendance from these churches have been better? The researcher surmises that a couple of challenges stood in the way of greater diversity of church participation. First, the charismatic nature of this workshop, with its advertised theme of healing and prophecy, does not fit into many of the churches theology of ministry, so it stands to reason why they did not come. They probably simply didn’t relate to the topic. Still, I had hoped for more people to come. Even though I began reaching out and talking to others about the workshop many months prior, I learned that having closer relational ties with other church leaders would have probably helped. As it was, about two-thirds of the attendees were from my church and knew me well, and most of the others were somehow related to me through my former military chaplain career. It did not come as a surprise that only twelve of the eighteen who attended most of the workshop actually volunteered for the project. I was up front about the significant commitment required, and realized not everybody had the time or the interest level to commit to it.

The researcher was also not surprised in the fifty-percent drop in attendance from the first night to the second day of the training event. I believe most attendees only planned to come for the first night, based on rsvp's received. As a recommendation to increase participation in the workshop in the context of our high paced, busy culture, I would consider changing the workshop to support two, one-day workshops lasting eight hours each, where each topic (healing and prophecy) is focused on separately on different weekends, as opposed to trying to do them together in one weekend. Also, any teaching on the Kingdom of God and gifts of the Spirit that the local church pastor could do on Sunday mornings prior to the training, would be most heartily recommended.

As for the content of the workshop, several attendees noted that more practice time was needed to develop the concepts of prophetic and healing ministry, especially using the five-step prayer model. The most effective aspects of the workshop, based on observation and feedback received, included the emphasis on allowing the Holy Spirit to move freely in worship and prayer times, use of testimony video clips, the teaching focus on the Kingdom of God, and prayers of prophetic and healing impartation. Having excellent food and hospitable service didn't hurt either. It's appropriate to note for future workshops, to be careful to prepare non-charismatics or those new to the gifts for new things they might see and experience. One minister who attended from the Seventh Day Adventist church, was a bit caught off guard and recommended a better orientation to tongues-speaking, in particular.

In the final analysis, the biggest personal gain from this project has been a reinforced confidence in the Kingdom mandate of praying for the sick and prophesying to others. I learned that if we will stretch out our hand to heal the sick and open our mouth

to prophesy, the King himself will stretch out his hand over ours and fill our mouths with his words. The results will be mighty fruit, and love and joy to both the person who prayed and the person receiving prayer. This project has reinforced in my mind God's willingness to come through for us, even when we don't want to reach out due to tiredness, distraction, or doubt. It seems that God loves and appreciates our willingness and sacrifice in those times more than when "feel like" praying. Bringing the Kingdom of God, and leading others to do the same, into seemingly hopeless and challenging situations will always take faith and risk, but nothing else on earth can satisfy as much as knowing I've done the will of God.

A valuable future work related to this one, would be to further study the power of testimony as it relates to praying for the sick and prophecy. Each answered prayer seems to beget more answered prayer, which begets more blessing and answered prayer. It would be valuable, to observe and document how far this blessing chain actually goes in real cases. As for now, this author is challenged and encouraged like never before grow praying for the sick and prophesying to others as a consistent lifestyle, expecting signs and wonders to follow!

**APPENDIX A**  
**WORKSHOP AGENDA**

### Friday, November 11, 2016

6:30 pm to 7:00 pm	Registration, Refreshments, and Introductions
7:00 pm to 7:15 pm	Welcome and Prayer by Durant Kreider, Senior Pastor CCC
7:15 pm to 8:15 pm	SESSION 1: Healing and the Kingdom of God
8:15 pm to 9:00 pm	Holy Spirit Impartation in the Sanctuary

### Saturday, November 12, 2016

9:00 am to 9:15 am	Continental Breakfast
9:15 am to 9:30 am	Worship and Prayer
9:30 am to 10:15 am	SESSION 2: Prophecy 101 – Hearing God’s Voice
10:15 am to 10:45 am	Hearing the Voice of God Practice + Break
10:45 am to 11:30 am	SESSION 3: Prophecy 101 – The Gift of Prophecy
11:30 am to Noon	Personal Prophecy Practice Exercise
Noon to 1:00 pm	Enjoy Lunch!
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm	SESSION 4: Five Step Prayer Model and Practice
2:00 pm to 5:00 pm	SESSION 5: How to do a Treasure Hunt and go “Happy Hunting!” (Please depart by 3:00 pm and return to the Church Sanctuary by 4:30 pm for Treasure Reports!)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **PRE- AND POST-TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRES**



**PRE-TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**1. What age demographic describes you best?**

- a. Under 20    b. 20-29    c. 30-39    d. 40-49    e. 50-59  
f. 60-69    g. 70-79    h. 80+

**2. How many years have you been a practicing Christian?**

- a. Less than 1  
b. 1-5  
c. 5-10  
d. 10 or more

**3. Which one of the following best describes your ministry position?**

- a. Volunteer  
b. Church Staff  
c. Elder/Deacon  
d. Licensed/Ordained minister  
e. Currently preparing for professional ministry

**4. What faith group or theological tradition do you most closely identify with?**

- a. Baptist  
b. Catholic  
c. Methodist  
d. Pentecostal/Charismatic  
e. Mainline Protestant (Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian, etc.)  
f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Have you ever been baptized/filled or anointed with the Holy Spirit?** (Generally defined as someone laying hands on you and imparting the gifts and power of God)

- a. Yes  
b. No  
c. Not sure

**6. If you answered YES to the last question, how long has it been since your most recent experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit?**

- a. Less than a year
- b. 1–5 years
- c. 5-10 years
- d. 10 or more years

**7. How often do you hear God's voice?** (Some ways you might hear God's voice include a divinely inspired dream, vision, image, thought, gesture, circumstance, symbol, whisper in your heart, highlighted Bible verse, etc...)

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes / Occasionally
- d. Often
- e. Daily

**8. How often does God use you to give inspired words to others for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort?** (This is an example of prophecy according to 1 Corinthians 14, which someone has simply defined as *God communicating His thoughts and intents to another person through you.*)

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes / Occasionally
- d. Often
- e. Daily

**9. How often do you directly pray healing for sick and/or injured people?** (defined as praying for healing with laying on of hands, or otherwise in their close proximity).

- a. Never
- b. Rarely
- c. Sometimes / Occasionally
- d. Often
- e. Daily

**POST-TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**1. After attending this workshop, how likely are you to hear God's voice in the future?**

a. More likely

b. The same

c. Less likely

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. After attending this workshop, how likely are you to prophecy to others in the future?**

a. More likely

b. The same

c. Less likely

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. After attending this workshop, how likely are you to heal the sick in the future?**

a. More likely

b. The same

c. Less likely

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. At the workshop, did you experience the gifts and power of God being imparted to you through the Holy Spirit?**

a. Yes

b. No

c. Not sure

If so, please briefly explain what happened in that experience? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Are you willing and able to participate in Pastor Ed's doctoral project over a 4 week period, by praying for healing and/or prophesying over people in your ministry context**

and providing Pastor Ed feedback on your experiences, and allowing him to provide instruction and feedback to you?

**a. Yes**

**b. No**

**c. Not sure**

## **APPENDIX C**

### **POST PROJECT FOCUS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. How has attending the workshop impacted your life and ministry since then?
  2. Discuss any specific areas of learning and growth from attending the workshop and since then regarding the workshop topics (Healing and the Kingdom, Hearing the Voice of God, The Gift of Prophecy 101, Five Step Prayer model for healing, and Treasure Hunting.)
  3. Describe the ministry contexts in which you prayed for the sick and prophesied? (some possible contexts might include: home, work, church, marketplace, with the poor/homeless, etc.) Which ministry contexts did you find the easiest and which were the most challenging, and why?
  - 4 Describe the impact of your ministry upon on others (including those you prayed for) during your participation with this project?
  5. What was your most memorable and meaningful testimony of giving a prophetic word and/or healing the sick? What made it meaningful and memorable?
  6. What kind of difficulties and/or disappointments have you experienced, if any, in doing supernatural ministry? Why do you think some people receive healing and encouragement and others don't?
  7. What are areas of training or mentoring that you wished you could have gotten in the workshop and project that you didn't? What would you like more of, if any, regarding these topics?
- \* Thank you all for participating in my project and this focus group interview

## **APPENDIX D**

### **MINISTRY ENCOUNTER CARD**

(side 1 of 2)

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out **both** sides as soon as possible after a ministry encounter, take a picture of it, and text it to Ed Bass at 757-619-6176 or via email: [chapsbass@yahoo.com](mailto:chapsbass@yahoo.com)

This was a Physical HEALING / PROPHETIC Encounter (*circle all that applies*)

**What events led** to you pray for healing or to prophesy \_\_\_\_\_

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**Ministry impact on them** (what happened in the encounter, for example, “pain level went from 5 to 2”, or “person was greatly encourage . . .,” etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

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(side 2 of 2)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow up intentions** (Are you able or planning to follow up to confirm healing or pray/share further?)

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**Ministry Impact on You** (Share your thoughts and feelings about this encounter / How did you grow):

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## **APPENDIX E**

### **FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

In Attendance: 5 project participants, 1 workshop attendee, and the researcher.

Date: Feb 4, 2017

1. How has attending the workshop impacted your life and ministry since then?

DK: I learned there was no divide between sacred and secular...it's all sacred (therefore we need to be praying and prophesying in a lifestyle "as we go")

TW: There was an increase so much more in my own life...(hard to explain), but really just coming up where God lives in the Spirit as opposed to staying in the natural. (Since the workshop) it's like night and day where I was. It's truly brought a peace in my own heart and life and even in my interactions with those around me. It's been a big boost. It's almost as if...I walked in spiritual things before but it was more intermittent....God wasn't always part of my life....now it's more of a lifestyle as opposed to an event.

DW: (I now have) more boldness whether its walking in Walmart or whatever. There was a period of time where I into people with right foot injuries wherever I went...and I missed a lot of times to bless people with God's presence and his love, I said Lord I'm sorry so please bless them...because of the workshop it has gotten me out there a whole lot more (than I was before)..a lot more hunger to operate in the supernatural...to bring His Kingdom. (I affirmed her in her growth...how when I first met her to now).

CR: For me, it's not....I cut my teeth on the theology of the Kingdom at the Catch the Fire all these years...for me the growth has been in actually having to think about the recording (of the prayer events) and doing the cards with you, as made me hungry to document the encounters I do have. I've lived the lifestyle of praying for others, but now its like I actually have to keep track of what God is doing through me.....just being more conscious about building up a log of testimonies...that will hopefully help me seek for more (impact) in my ministry...to seek for more impact in certain areas.

EW: Sometimes people will ask me to prayer for them.....and I sometimes just let it go, even a text request, it's pushed me to (not wait) and say I'll keep you in my prayers, but to pray for people right then because the Holy Spirit can move right then...I've had people say thanks you was awesome I needed that prayer...makes me more conscious when you don't know what a person stand in need of but God knows. So when God puts some person on your heart, just a name then you begin to pray for that person now, then you call that person and you just....just a blessing because we are our brother's keepers.

2. Discuss any specific areas of learning and growth from attending the workshop and since then regarding the workshop topics (Healing and the Kingdom, Hearing the Voice of God, The Gift of Prophecy 101, Five Step Prayer model for healing, and Treasure Hunting.)

DW: I'm a slow learner, so I need things drilled into me before I get it. For me there is so much to remember and I'm finally getting it. To me there is so much to remember. (Me: Did you find yourself Prophesying?): No, I did not do that before.

CR: I think the 5 step prayer model is very effective....it's actually John Wimber's prayer model, but it literally is just a guide...not a law, but for someone who is like my wife who is very analytical it does help categorize things in your head. You'll like if you love organization and you will like it if you think in steps...don't ever feel like you have to do the model...but it helps you keep organized.

DW: Given my personality type for what it is....I'm free flowing and open ended so I use it as a suggestion or whatever...but for me this was an important refresher, a reminder once again of how important it is to live this (supernatural) life all the time, however I do it, just 'do it', I like that in my life in all areas.....the inspiration I received was as good as any tool I got. I don't know if I picked it up that night or not, but I know I've heard it from Bill Wise, that whenever I have an encounter like that whether there is an instant manifestation or not, that the most important thing is that did the person feel loved when they came away from the encounter, that they are not intimidated by my forwardness in asking them (if I can pray) and by the Holy Spirit's grace how would I engage this person in possibly a life changing moment where they feel the love of God. It also takes away any performance anxiety that if something doesn't happen in this moment, I'm not a failure. We are not a failure if we show the people the love of God.

DK: Something else I think of is how we are all busy...and I don't have time to put another thing on my schedule that is gonna stress me out. It's so freeing for me and I have way more encounters when it's like the disciples...they went out and spread the Kingdom "as they went". It's not like oh today's evangelism day or today is prayer day, but as we go God opens the door

TW: That's exactly what I found more since after I've taken this workshop but as I go God opens doors and also I'd say that 98 percent of the time no longer do I have the sense of "who am I?" to do this, it's like what would Jesus do. You know this person is hurting and who am I to not do it...it's like a complete shift of mindset

DW: Yeah, same here, I was walking though Walmart and I'm always feeling convicted like I got to pray for this person...I don't want to operate out of guilt but you know the lady was really hunched over...I need to step out and not be afraid to step out. I kept walking by and the Lord said, if that was you, would you want people to just walk by. So I said good point and I went back and I prayed for her and she did feel so loved and I did feel the power of God go through and heal her. I don't want to be operating out of fear I want to be operating out of the Holy Spirit.

CR: Bill Johnson says this, "it's impossible to pray and not to have anything happen" we may not see it but it's arrogant of us to think that God would not do something and heaven would not back us if we step out in faith to pray.. It may not be how we think, but it's impossible to pray and not have something happen:

3. Describe the ministry contexts in which you prayed for the sick and prophesied? (some possible contexts might include: home, work, church, marketplace, with the poor/homeless, etc) Which ministry contexts did you find the easiest and which were the most challenging, and why?

DK: The gym is my place where I have lots of encounters, I didn't fill out these cards, but I cannot tell you how many times I've had encounters (at the gym). I was on a machine Friday a week ago. I had injured my shoulder three months ago playing racquetball, still in the rehab phase at that point and there was this man called J. who I've been ministering to...it wasn't a prophetic thing at that moment, but I reached through the machine and grabbed his hand and prayed for him, and then suddenly I realized there was no pain in my shoulder! I thought wait a second, and said J. hey come back over here God just healed me!...then the testimony of this thing just went...just on Tuesday morning I'm at my morning bible study at Krispy Kreme and I see a young man behind the counter named T. who's been having questions about the bible, and I said T. let me tell you a story....his eyes get real big and says his shoulder is killing him from this construction job and so I'm holding up the line reaching over the cash register praying for him and with just a real short prayer, Lord just touch him. He looks at me with wide eyes like I'm not sure what just happened...but he came away from that encounter feeling loved. This was my fourth conversation with him and it's just another reminder to (do this) as you go.

EW: For me it was the telephone...Chaplain bass called me on tuesday before Christmas and prayed that God would send folks for me to pray for whatever, I was in Newport News at church at the time of his prayer. As soon as I drove home someone called me at 11:00 at night...they knew it was late...I have 200 people in my rolodex and I came across your name and decided to call you. This person had no one to spend Christmas with because their entire family seemingly turned their back on them. And they were just feeling like dagger was going through them....so I listened to what they had to say. And it goes back to what Pastor Durant said, people need to feel love. As a pastor or elder or minister sometimes we might need to stop them, and sometimes we might need to stop them and say something that might not seem compassionate....and I had to say, honey baby, you are not the only one going through hard times. Because a lot of times people look at their circumstance and not think of somebody else going through worse. I then began to pray asking God to bind generational curses in her family line and as I was praying the person began to tell me they felt like they were on an operating table and actually began to feel the daggers come out of them, because people had been talking about her. She felt a peace and she began to shout out to the Lord and then repented. She's an awesome woman of God who does street ministry. Before we hung up I gave her a word from the Lord and that call went to 2:00am in the morning....so at the end she prophesied to me and she said she sway me talking to people and calling out what they need as the Holy Spirit tell me. That was an awesome experience in and of itself. That was a NOW...Chaplain Bass had just prayed with an hour and a half. I was overwhelmed that chaplain bass payed and it happen instantly. That got me into the mode of ok God I'm going to be more available to the needs to your people.....that individual thanked the next day and said you just don't know what that did for me. She

was a prayer warrior who was going to give up....God showed her some things...God sent her a young man the next day who came up and gave her a hug and it was very healing and the Holy Spirit said this is your family...we need to look at things not from the natural but the Spirit. I think the whole healing and deliverance conference was key for me to see that its not about the focus on ourselves but on what Jesus would do....

- 4 Describe the impact of your ministry upon on others (including those you prayed for) during your participation with this project? What was your most memorable and meaningful testimony of giving a prophetic word and/or healing the sick? What made it meaningful and memorable?

EW: One of the last things I sent you but a pastor called me and I said I dint feel the anointing on the praise and worship...you hit the nail of the head...but I saw the residue at the end of the service of the preached word...the Lord showed me that his wife was dealing with witchcraft spirit....but amazing what happened was I had a book that I was able to prayer some prayers about seducing spirits. From all that, he said I began to pray and he felt the peace of God upon me.

LH: I normally don't get out a whole lot, but I was ministering to my Uber driver...I asked him if he was a pastor...I could just see it on him and he said why are you saying those things and I just said the Lord knows your heart is broken right now and the things you are going through right now is not because you are doing things wrong but the Lord is building you up...He said wow everything you said is a confirmation to me..I can't believe this. Then there was this girl who was traumatized by abuse....

Teri: I have a testimony. The other night when I asked you to pray about the landlord being mean and unreasonable, that situation turned around and God answered prayer!

EW: the more we give testimonies it helps other people out. The more God allows us to have breakthroughs, the more people will call us to get prayers through. Not every believer has that kind of favor...the more testimonies are given for God's glory, the more opportunities we will get.

4. What kind of difficulties and/or disappointments have you experienced, if any, in doing supernatural ministry? Why do you think some people receive healing and encouragement and others don't?

TW: I really have been able to step out to prayer for folks for needs whether it's sickness, financial or whatever, emotional....I really have been able to step out...the thing I haven't done is a lot of times when it's people I won't see again I'm not getting feedback, but I have stopped and a lot of times when the Lord is just powerful on me, I can feel His presence as I'm praying over them, and they are always thankful. I have noticed there is a lady I work with, a Christian who has a lot of physical complaints, but when I ask if she want's prayer, she says no I've been praying...(DW chimes in)...yeah I know I've run into people who've been disappointed or something and won't let you pray for them.

(TW back in) yeah it's almost like they get offended that you ask to pray for them....., but eventually God opened up her heart and she said yes so I did and she did feel somewhat better, but she still had issues. (So I try to say) Let's pray now!

Me: his brings up the difficulty of why isn't everyone healed, right?

CR: when people say don't pray for me, I've already been prayed for, its exactly that...they've been disappointed. I was having this conversation with my analytical wife and it takes me maybe a dozen times before the spiritual light comes on...she was having a hard time with her difficult boss at work...she was disappointed that after prayer things seemed to get better then go back again. I told her that our problem is that we want to see things happen NOW, we have this phrase in theology now and not yet, but I'm becoming more and more convinced that God's definition of now is totally different than ours, his timetable is different than ours, he is outside of time so when we pray we are praying to a being who is outside time and works in a whole different plane of the spirit, so when we pray for something there is resistance...(Daniels example of encountering the Prince of Persia). So God's timing is different than ours, and we are so used to getting things instantly. Just remember we are talking about something going from the natural into the spiritual realm and you cannot see what God is having to do wo make something happen so just be patient and trust. And for me, being in a wheelchair and being around this kind of environment it would be very easy for me to get discouraged about not seeing more physical manifestation of healing, but over time God has shown me hey you are on my timetable, don't look at what the world defines as now...example of Jesus saying, "I am coming quickly" being 2000 years ago! His definition of quickly was is not ours.

Me: Why don't know why some people receive and other's don't.

CR: that's why going back and getting testimonies maybe even weeks or years later is important, because we don't know what has happened since we prayed.

DK: I think results are something we tend to quantify as human beings, and the result whether If its people feel loved or that God is doing something and that's why trust, like you said, is so important. Healing might be the least common denominator, God may be doing something in their heart as a result of the prayer and something that you may never see, and it's a life changing situation, but we want to SEE the results.

CR: Because we see results in the bible. As Americans we look at the bible and see instantaneous answers to prayer all the time, but we don't realize those particular stories are written down for a purpose, so we don't know what the normative was...now with Jesus I'm pretty sure those things were instantaneous well because that's just awesome....but the point is, we don't know. But the way the bible is written does not help as our thinking as Americans. Its instantaneous in the bible why don't' we see it...and (we presume) well if I don't see it therefore it must not be true...wrong!

5. What are areas of training or mentoring that you wished you could have gotten in the workshop and project that you didn't? What would you like more of, if any, regarding these topics? Was the workshop effective in jumpstarting you in a supernatural lifestyle?

DW: I could have used more hands on more practice with the 5 Step Prayer model.

CR: M. gave a good teaching on prophecy 101 but no practical teaching on how this is how you do it (we did do a practical exercise but could have used more of a teaching/training time of follow up)

DK: Follow up on people is so important...sounds like you've done a great job with the emails and follow up.

TW: The workshop definitely had an effect on my life and your emails and sending out testimonies from Bill Wise...that encouraged me to pursue supernatural ministry "as I go". Workshops are short but this had major effect.

DK: Jumpstart is a good word...(that's what the workshop did.)

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